



U.N. continues hunt in Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — Arms experts combing Iraq for hidden nuclear activity split into several groups Tuesday to inspect as many sites as possible, United Nations sources said. The 24 inspectors left their Baghdad hotel and drove in four different directions, the sources added. The team leader, Dimitri Pericos, said a group of nuclear specialists had been visiting engineering plants to check for activities prohibited by Gulf war ceasefire terms. "A group has been going around and visiting different state establishments for engineering," said the Greek expert from the International Atomic Energy Agency. Mr. Pericos said some teams had carried out short-notice inspections and a small group had spent five days deep in the Western al-Rasheed area in northern Iraq. "They visited four facilities up there. They gathered whatever results they have and now they'll be evaluated to see what we can get out of it," Mr. Pericos said. He arrived in Baghdad on Wednesday. He described his findings so far as "both positive and negative. Negative when you think that something is there and there is nothing, positive when you think there is something there and you find it."

Iraq demands end to spy flights, page 2

Jordan Times

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جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

Cairo appoints counsellor to Iraq

AMMAN (AP) — Egypt is sending a career diplomat to Baghdad to upgrade its representation there after a strain in ties that followed Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, an Egyptian embassy official said Tuesday. Rida Abdul Karim, a diplomat at the Foreign Ministry in Cairo who previously served in Czechoslovakia, will travel Wednesday to Baghdad to assume his post as counsellor, said the official, who insisted on anonymity. Egypt withdrew its diplomats from Baghdad after the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, leaving only two administrative attaches to run an interest section at the Indian embassy. Egypt is only the second member of the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition that has decided to upgrade its representation in Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf war. Turkey sent a counsellor to Iraq earlier this month to reopen its embassy there.

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Qatar denies reconciliation effort

DUBAI (R) — Qatar denied Tuesday it was trying to reconcile Kuwait and Iraq and said its contacts with the two were aimed at securing the release of Kuwaitis believed to be held in Iraq. The official Qatari News Agency (QNA) quoted Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Jaber Al Thani as saying Qatar "was trying to secure the release of Kuwait prisoners... it is not specifically direct mediation to normalise ties between the two countries." Press reports in the region said in the past week Kuwait had rejected a Qatari effort to mediate between Kuwait and Iraq. Sheikh Hamad said Doha had undertaken the "humanitarian effort on the occasion of the blessed month of Ramadan." Qatar has sent its ambassador back to Baghdad. Most other Gulf Arab states have shunned any contacts since the end of the Gulf war.

Palestinians strike in Syria

DAMASCUS (R) — Palestinians in refugee camps in Syria went on strike on Tuesday in protest against the Arab-Israeli peace talks. A Palestinian source told Reuters students in all Palestinian schools stayed away from classes. Signs in the streets called on Palestinian negotiators to withdraw from the peace talks and demanded the return home of 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel to South Lebanon.

Savimbi orders fighters back to bush

NICOSIA (R) — Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi ordered his fighters back to the bush Tuesday saying they should reorganise disbanded units to continue the fight against the government. At the same time, Mr. Savimbi, in an address to the nation on his movement's radio station, demanded a change of venue and replacement of the U.N. mediator in Angola as the price of his participation in further peace talks with the government.

Bomb damages Kuwait music shop

KUWAIT (R) — A bomb exploded at a music shop in a Kuwait City suburb Tuesday, causing damage but no injuries, police said. "There was an explosion in a record shop in Khaitan area at two o'clock in the morning. No one was injured and at present there are no suspects," a spokesman said. A similar explosion ripped through another music shop in the same district last Thursday, causing damage but no injuries. The blasts bring to at least six the number of bomb explosions in Khaitan since the liberation of Kuwait by U.S.-led coalition troops from Iraqi forces in February 1991. The previous explosions have targeted video shops. Suspicion has concentrated on Islamic extremists. Major fundamentalist groups have denied responsibility.

Malaysia detains Iranian supertanker

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Malaysian authorities have detained an Iranian supertanker that dropped anchor in waters off the southern state of Johor without approval, an official from the state harbour master's office said Tuesday. The 289,750-tonne Taffan, owned by the state-run National Iranian Tanker Co. and detained on Monday, will be held pending investigations, the official said. He said investigators had questioned the crew of 44 Indian nationals and a Sri Lankan and seized documents from the empty Taffan, which left Iran's Kharg Island on Feb. 24 for repairs in Singapore.

Arab Bank clarifies stand

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Arab Bank Tuesday issued a statement clarifying its position vis-a-vis its presence in the occupied West Bank. "Over five years ago the Arab Bank applied to reopen its branches there but the conditions of the occupiers were and still are unacceptable to the Arab Bank and this has precluded us from reopening our branches in the West Bank," the bank said.

U.S. to issue invitations soon to Arabs, Israel for resumed talks April 20

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Arabs and Israel will be asked to resume their suspended peace talks in Washington on April 20 in invitations to be issued in a few days, Clinton administration officials said Tuesday.

Only the participation of the Palestinians has not been assured. They have objected to terms reached by the United States and Israel for the repatriation of 396 Palestinian expellees now in Lebanon.

The invitations will be issued by the co-sponsors, the United States and Russia. The last round ended here in mid-December with some progress in Israel's talks with both Syria and Jordan.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, in his first overseas trip, urged leaders in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Israel as well as the Palestinians to return to the table.

He reported afterwards a commitment to the peace process from all sides. But he did not get a specific pledge from the Palestinians to resume talks with Israel on limited self-rule on the West Bank and Gaza.

Still, Mr. Christopher and Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev decided in Geneva, Switzerland, on Feb. 25 to go ahead with invitations.

Administration officials, insisting on anonymity, told the Associated Press Tuesday they hoped the Palestinians would be present.

The Syrians are known to be eager to resume talks with Israel because they hold promise of regaining part, if not all, of the Golan Heights.

Israel is demanding peace from Syria as a precondition to "territorial compromise." Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is due here on Friday and will meet with President Bill Clinton next Tuesday.

"We are working together," Mr. Clinton said at a news conference Tuesday. "I feel very confident he wants the peace process back on track."

Israel television said later that the peace talks will resume in Washington on April 19.

In an unreported report Israel Television said invitations to the U.S.-brokered talks would be sent on Wednesday to all parties in the negotiations.

It said the State Department had decided on the date and had

unofficially, notified the partners to the talks, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians.

An Israeli spokesman declined to comment on the report. "We will comment when we receive an invitation," he said.

In Damascus, Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreed Tuesday to press ahead with plans to convene an Arab conference in Damascus to try to relaunch the peace talks and solve the question of Palestinian expellees.

The Syrian News Agency, reporting on a meeting between Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharara and Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, said the aim was for the conference to convene after the Holy Month of Ramadan, which ends in about a fortnight.

Mr. Sharara said last month Syria would convene an Arab conference in Damascus, but so far Syria has not given invitations or set an exact date.

Mr. Christopher said meanwhile the United States will adhere "for the time being" to its

congressional sub-committee looking into the possibility that the bombing is the first of a new wave of attacks against the United States. Five people were killed in the bombing and 1,000 injured.

"The American public should always be vigilant, but this suspected act of terrorism should not be viewed as the opening act in a coming wave of terrorism," Mr. Sessions said.

He said the last "international terrorist activity on U.S. soil occurred last April, when Iranian opposition organisation took over the Iranian mission to the United Nations in New York."

"Prior to that incident, there had not been an international terrorism attack in the United States since 1983," Mr. Sessions said.

According to FBI statistics, there have been 163 attacks in the United States since 1902, most of them domestic incidents in Puerto Rico by Puerto Ricans, Mr. Sessions said.

Mr. Sessions' assessment differed from that of the sub-committee chairman, Representative Charles E. Schumer, who earlier warned that the trade centre bombing and the killing of two Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employees in a Washington suburb could be the first violence in a new wave of terrorism in this country.

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Palestinian boys hurls rocks at an Israeli army jeep in the occupied Gaza Strip Tuesday (AFP photo)

FBI says 'large group' behind World Trade Centre bombing

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — A Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) official told Congress Tuesday he believes that a "large, well known terrorist group" bombed New York's Trade Centre, but his director said it likely does not signal a coming wave of terrorism in the United States.

James Fox, head of the FBI's New York office, said it was his "gut feeling" that the Feb. 26 bombing was "a terrorist incident organised by a large, well-known terrorist group."

He did not identify the organisation but said, "it is a group that knows what they're doing. This was not a group of ad hoc terrorists."

Mr. Fox and FBI Director William Sessions testified before a

congressional sub-committee looking into the possibility that the bombing is the first of a new wave of attacks against the United States. Five people were killed in the bombing and 1,000 injured.

"The American public should always be vigilant, but this suspected act of terrorism should not be viewed as the opening act in a coming wave of terrorism," Mr. Sessions said.

He said the last "international terrorist activity on U.S. soil occurred last April, when Iranian opposition organisation took over the Iranian mission to the United Nations in New York."

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Settler who shot Gazan said to turn himself in

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A Jewish settler from the occupied Gaza Strip turned himself in Tuesday, saying he opened fire during a clash in which an Arab labourer was shot to death, police said.

Police arrested the 43-year-old man the Ganei Tal settlement after questioning, said Gaza police commander David Sabat. More settlers may be arrested on suspicion of having fired shots during Monday's confrontation with Arab workers, he said.

The shootings could signal a new stage of violence in the Gaza Strip. Settlers have complained they are being abandoned by the government following calls by some cabinet ministers for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and might feel greater justification to engage in vigilante acts.

The settlers' Rabbi, Yigal Kaminsky, Tuesday refused to condemn violence. "I don't think we want just revenge against the Arabs, but I think we have to give every Jew the possibility to respond and defend himself against Arab actions against us," Rabbi Kaminsky told Israeli army radio.

Monday's confrontation in the northern Gaza Strip came after settler Uri Magidish, 39, was stabbed to death by Palestinian workers. As settlers returned from Magidish' funeral and Palestinians got back from jobs in Israel, a stone-throwing clash erupted, with both sides saying the other started. Shots were fired, killing 25-year-old Naim Maidan.

The settler who turned himself in

(Continued on page 5)

PLO, Hamas resume talks; basic differences remain

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A dialogue between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hamas resumed in Amman this week with high-level meetings between Jordan-based Hamas leaders and the PLO official Abbas Zaki.

Two meetings, one held Monday and one Saturday, revolved around the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 and "coordination" between the PLO and Hamas in the occupied territories.

"We have been discussing two issues which we agree upon which is 799 and developments in the occupied territories," said Hamas representative in Jordan Mohammad Nazzal. "Cooperation between Hamas and the PLO in the occupied territories was discussed," Mr. Nazzal told the Jordan Times.

Neither Mr. Nazzal nor Mr. Zaki would discuss the nature of cooperation between the two groups.

"The talks have not yielded

fruit yet and therefore I prefer not to make announcements about the nature of our dialogue," said Mr. Zaki, a leading figure in the mainstream Fatah faction.

But relations between the PLO and Hamas remain strained as a result of Hamas' overtures to foreign governments over the Dec. 17 expulsion of some 400 Palestinians who are largely affiliated to Hamas as well as the Islamic Jihad.

"Right now the PLO is really not very happy with Hamas," said a Tunis-based PLO official who has sat in on some of the PLO-Hamas talks.

"As the representatives of the Palestinian people we are responsible for those evictions in South Lebanon and we have made major diplomatic overtures on their behalf," said the official, speaking to the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity.

There was no need for Hamas to appeal and meet with foreign diplomats over this issue," said the official in an angry tone.

"The talks have not yielded

Fighting shatters Kabul ceasefire; 42 injured

KABUL (Agencies) — Fighting between Afghan troops and a minority party injured 42 people in Kabul, hospitals said Tuesday, but the belligerents told a ceasefire committee they would honour a peace accord signed by their leaders this week.

The minority Hezb-e-Wahdat opened fire with mortars in the western suburbs last Monday and sporadic fire echoed over the shell-shattered capital for much of the night.

Hospitals said one person was killed and 42 injured in the fighting, which broke out a day after the rival Afghan leaders signed a peace accord in Islamabad and declared an immediate ceasefire.

A ceasefire committee made up of two representatives from each of the three main warring sides said they had received assurances from Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud and the Hezb-e-Wahdat that the fighting would cease.

"Masoud told us there will be no firing from the government side," said Mohammad Faisal, a representative from Pakistan,

which brokered Sunday's peace agreement.

All the leaders were in Saudi Arabia to offer prayers at Mecca and other shrines in honour of their accord.

"What is the meaning of this peace accord?" asked one resident of the northwestern suburb of Timony. "There are still rockets hitting our homes."

More than 1,000 people have been killed and 6,000 injured since the start of the year in battles for power in Kabul.

"So far the problem has not been solved but they have gone to Saudi Arabia to thank God," another resident said.

"A peace agreement is one thing, but implementing it will be difficult," said General Abdul Monin, commander of an army unit that joined the rebels to help topple the communist regime last April.

In neighbouring Pakistan, the well-armed rebel factions struggling to set up an Islamic government capable of ending bloodshed agreed over the weekend to accept a peace agreement.

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Rome cabinet will not resign, minister says

ROME (Agencies) — The Italian government will not resign despite a political uproar over its attempts to change a crucial corruption law, Foreign Trade Minister Claudio Vitalone said on Tuesday.

Cabinet Secretary Fabio Fabri told reporters at the end of a two-hour cabinet meeting that Prime Minister Giuliano Amato would present a parliamentary amendment to change the law.

Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, bitherto Mr. Amato's staunchest political supporters, refused to push the proposal through by decree Sunday, severely embarrassing Mr. Amato and promoting opposition calls for his resignation.

Mr. Amato himself earlier prompted speculation he might quit when he complained in an interview with the Milan daily

Corriere Della Sera that he had been let down by his allies and that in moments of solitude the thought of resignation was inevitable.

Four of Mr. Amato's ministers have resigned in the past month and his justice minister, Giovanni Conso, announced Monday he was also thinking of leaving because it was no longer possible for him to work properly.

Police said Tuesday they arrested the chairman and another top official of Italy's state energy conglomerate, the latest figures to fall in a nationwide scandal ensnaring business and political giants.

Word of the arrests of Gabriele Cagliari and Franco Ciatti at ENI, Italy's third largest employer, sent share prices plunging on the Milan stock exchange. Mr. Cagliari, the conglomerate's chairman, was arrested Monday night, and Mr. Ciatti, who heads the conglomerate's engineering unit Nuovo Pignone, was arrested Tuesday, police said.

Militants go on trial for Egypt tourist attacks

CAIRO (Agencies) — Muslim militants charged with attacks on foreigners that have devastated Egypt's tourist industry went on trial Monday, shouting warnings of more violence and alleging they were tortured.

Forty-three defendants were handcuffed in pairs and hustled into metal cages in the military court, a converted theatre on an armed forces base in the desert outside Cairo. Another six were being tried in their absence.

One of the accused shouted out a defiant history of Al Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic Group), and organisation they are accused of supporting.

Defendant Hisham Abdul Zaher shouted that the group was led by a blind preacher in exile in the United States, Omar Abdul Rahman, two of whose alleged followers were arrested after last month's bombing of New York's World Trade Centre.

Mr. Abdul Zaher said the Gama'a had killed Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981. Parliament Speaker Rifaat Mahjoub

in 1990 and an anti-fundamentalist writer, Farag Foda, in 1992, and would continue attacks on tourists until they achieved its aims.

The defendants shouted "There is no God but God" and brandished copies of the Koran. They held up banners reading "We did not kill any tourists" and "Islam is coming" for the scores of reporters, photographers and camera crews packing the room.

All 49 are accused of "damaging national unity and social peace by calling for a change of the system of government" and "damaging the national economy by attacking tourism."

Groups of them are also charged with attempted murder in five specific gun and bomb attacks on tourist buses and a bomb attack on a Nile cruiser. Others were charged with weapons offences and a group of six with publicising the campaign through leaflets and contacts with journalists.

(Continued on page 5)

Washington to seek to free \$50 million in aid to Jordan

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The Clinton administration will soon seek to release \$50 million in assistance funds to Jordan, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Edward Djerejian said Monday.

Mr. Djerejian, discussing the Middle East peace process and U.S. assistance programme for the region with the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee's subcommittee on Foreign Operations, paid tribute to the democratisation process under way in Jordan.

He also said Jordan was enforcing the sanctions against Iraq with "utmost vigour."

Mr. Djerejian also reviewed the outcome of the recent visit to the Middle East by Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

In Jordan, Mr. Djerejian said: "In Amman, the secretary noted substantial progress towards democratisation and King Hussein's commitment to protection of human rights. Jordan is taking concrete steps towards economic reform and a strengthened free market economy. Of course, Jordan has been a key participant in the peace process and we look forward to its continued positive role. King Hussein also assured the secretary that Jordan would continue to adhere to U.N. sanctions against Iraq."

"To support Jordan's positive role in the peace process and its adherence to U.N. sanctions, we will recommend soon to the secretary that he release the remaining \$50 million in fiscal year 1992 security assistance funds. We will, of course, discuss our plans with you and other members of Congress before disbursement."

The Clinton administration remains committed to continuing "significant aid levels to Israel and Egypt," Mr. Djerejian said.

"Both President Clinton and Secretary Christopher have gone on record regarding the importance of continuing aid to Israel and Egypt at current levels," Mr. Djerejian said.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to direct substantial foreign aid resources to the security of Israel, to support for Egypt's vital role in the stability and security to the region, and to the promotion of comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East," he stressed.

Mr. Djerejian noted that "because of declining overall levels," assistance programme to Egypt and Israel "have grown from 70 per cent of total U.S. security assistance in the late 1980s to almost 85 per cent in fiscal year 1993."

Mr. Djerejian asked the Congress to support the resumption of "accepting a number of Lebanese officers and enlisted personnel for training" in the United States. "A key to the extension of government authority throughout the country is the maintenance of strong Lebanese Armed Forces," he said.

Several members of the subcommittee questioned whether U.S. aid to Lebanon would eventually end up in "Syrian hands."

"In no way, in our assessment, is money going to any third country. It's going to Lebanon, and it's going to very viable purposes to support our policy of helping Lebanon restructure its economy, its armed forces..." Mr. Djerejian said.

In terms of the provision to

Lebanon of excess military equipment, the United States has obtained assurances from the Lebanese government and commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces that strict accountability for all material will be provided," he added.

In regards to assistance to Jordan, Mr. Djerejian said "Jordan's positive role in the peace process and its adherence to U.N. sanctions" against Iraq are "noteworthy." He praised Jordan for enforcing the sanctions against Iraq "with utmost rigor."

"Jordan needs our support," Mr. Djerejian stressed.

On the peace process, he said: "Since the eighth round of bilateral adjourned in mid-December, there has been a hiatus in the negotiations. President Clinton sent Secretary Christopher to the Middle East last month not only to reenergise and reactivate the peace talks, but also to assess the determination and commitment of the parties to the goal of a negotiated peace."

"The president and secretary especially wanted to emphasise the commitment of the United States to a full partnership role in this complex and difficult process, if and this is important, the parties come to the table prepared to engage in serious and meaningful negotiations in order to narrow the substantive differences between them."

"Much work needs to be done. Not only are the substantive positions between the parties still far apart, but the political environment has been made more difficult by the resurgence of violence directed against Israel by terrorists and by the deportation of Hamas activists."

Muslim leader who threatened Rushdie will not be prosecuted

LONDON (AP) — Government lawyers have decided not to prosecute a prominent British Muslim who in a radio interview about Salman Rushdie threatened: "We will...break every bone in his body."

Announcing the decision not to prosecute Kalim Siddiqui, the lord chancellor, Lord MacKay, the head of the judiciary, Monday told the House of Lords, the unelected upper house of parliament.

"The crown prosecution service...has concluded that the contents (of the interview) taken as a whole are not such as would afford a realistic prospect of conviction for incitement to murder or any other offence."

Mr. Siddiqui is leader of the Muslim Parliament, an unelected organisation he set up last year to defend Islamic interests in Britain. Moderate British Muslims say it is unrepresentative and British politicians have denounced it as separatist.

Mr. Siddiqui backed the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini when the Iranian spiritual leader called on Feb. 14, 1989 for Muslims to kill Mr. Rushdie for his novel "The Satanic Verses."

Mr. Rushdie, who was born in India but took British nationality, has been in hiding guarded by armed British police since Ayatollah Khomeini issued his death threat.

Mr. Siddiqui said in the interview with the London Broadcasting Company (LBC) last month: "I don't want to kill him. We will just break every bone in his body." But Mr. Siddiqui said afterwards that his remark was not meant literally.

Several members of the lords criticised the decision not to prosecute Mr. Siddiqui.

Lord Cledwyn, a member of the opposition Labour Party and a former cabinet minister, said: "If a Christian behaved in a Muslim country as Dr. Siddiqui has behaved here, he would find himself in serious trouble."

There are an estimated two million Muslims in Britain. Ayatollah Khomeini issued his death call after Muslims in Bradford, a city in northern England with a large immigrant Asian population, burned "The Satanic Verses" in a demonstration against the author.

Iraq demands U.S. stop spy plane flights

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraq Monday demanded that the United States stop flying U-2 spy plane missions over its territory and claimed they were used to help an Israeli hit squad that was trying to assassinate Saddam Hussein.

The official Iraqi News Agency (INA), monitored in Cyprus, said the demand was contained in a message sent by Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sahhaf to U.N. Secretary General Bontros Ghali.

He told Mr. Ghali that the United Nations ought to stop the flights "because these planes are being used for purposes other than those the Security Council specified."

Mr. Sahhaf did not specify exactly how the American spy planes had helped the Israelis. Neither Israel nor the United States military had any immediate comment.

The spy planes, flying at high altitude from bases in Turkey, have flown over Iraq since the end of the Gulf war in virtually daily missions aimed at ensuring Baghdad's compliance with the ceasefire.

Mr. Sahhaf alluded to British press reports that an Israeli hit squad operated in Iraq during the Gulf war and was preparing an operation to assassinate President Saddam.

This week's edition of the Lon-

don-based Sunday Times reported that Israeli intelligence operated in western Iraq during the Gulf war, trying to spot Scud missiles aimed at Israel.

The newspaper's front-page story also said the five Israeli soldiers killed by a stray missile during a training exercise as recently as November 1992 were rehearsing to assassinate President Saddam.

Previous reports have said the soldiers were training to kill Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of the Lebanese Shiite Muslim fundamentalist group Hizbollah.

The Israeli soldiers involved in both the assassination plot against President Saddam and the

bombing of Scud missiles belonged to Sayeret Matkal, a branch of military intelligence specialising in reconnaissance missions behind enemy lines. The Sunday Times said. The report was based on unnamed sources.

Mr. Sahhaf said the U-2 flights "threaten the sovereignty and security of Iraq." He pointed out that his government already had sent 59 letters to Mr. Ghali complaining of 118 "violations of Iraqi airspace" by the American spy planes.

It was the first time any connection has been alleged between the U-2 overflights and the reported Israeli operation aimed at killing President Saddam.

Former CIA director says Iran could have nuclear arms by 2000

LONDON (AP) — Iran could acquire nuclear weapons by the year 2000 or even sooner, former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Robert Gates said in an interview broadcast Monday night.

He said the United States had "sufficient evidence" that Iran was pursuing a nuclear weapons programme — not a peaceful nuclear power programme as Dr. Reza Annollahi, head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation, claimed.

The nuclear reactor which Iran is buying from China is geared for production of plutonium, not nuclear power, and this is what is of concern to us," he said.

Mr. Gates appeared on BBC Television's Panorama programme, which visited a number of countries including Iran, Kazakhstan, Hungary and Germany to examine Tehran's arms build-up following its eight-year conflict with Iraq and the Gulf war.

"What is of concern is Iran's determination to pursue weapons of mass destruction in all categories — biological weapons, chemical weapons, nuclear weapons and also the missiles to develop them," the former CIA chief said.

Asked when Iran could acquire nuclear weapons, Mr. Gates said a reasonable estimate would be "by the end of this decade."

But if Tehran receives "significant external support, particularly the acquisition on (nuclear) material from other countries," he said, "I would shorten that time."

David Kay, who headed a U.N. inspection team in Iraq, said he believes the Iranians have learned some valuable lessons from Iraq.

"Iran, in many ways, is like Iraq at the early stages of the Iraqi programme. That is a shop 'til you drop strategy essentially. Trying to acquire technical skills, training, technology and man-

facturing capability on as broad a front as possible," he said.

Unidentified Western intelligence sources were quoted as saying an Iranian delegation bought 100 tonnes of slightly enriched uranium pellets and the rare metal beryllium, a vital component in nuclear weapons, from the Ustakmenogorsk plant in Kazakhstan.

Factory managers refused to appear on camera and denied a deal had been struck during the visit last August, the BBC said.

Iran also bought more than £2 million (\$2.9 million) of equipment from the Hungarian firm, Lampart, which makes glass enamel-lined reactors, according to the BBC.

The BBC said these reactors are capable of handling the potent chemical reactions employed in the manufacture of mustard gas and nerve agents. But Lampart's commercial director, identified only as Mrs. Fonyah, said the equipment was "not correct for chemical weapons."

Mr. Gates said the United States does have evidence of an Iranian chemical weapons programme.

Tehran's programme, he said, "includes chocking, blister and blood agents in the chemical weapons arena. The estimates of their stockpile range from a few hundred tonnes to up to 2,000 tonnes of chemical stockpile."

Like Iraq, the BBC said, Iran has purchased dual-use technology from Germany.

The Sharif University of Technology and other Iranian institutions approached several German firms in an attempt to buy specialised magnets used in centrifuges including Magnetfabrik of Bonn, the BBC said.

Carl Schenck company supplied a balancing machine to Sharif University after it was told it was for educational purposes, the BBC said.

Dr. Kay said these three items would be key elements in a centrifuge process, the most modern way to enrich uranium to weapons-grade.

If anyone concerned about nuclear proliferation heard this list, he said, "their eyes would light up and the hair would literally stand on the back of your neck."

The Iranians have been thwarted in two attempted purchases.

Last month, U.S. officials stopped the shipment of an IBM ES 9000 computer, which can be used in the manufacture of nuclear devices and defence planning. In 1991, Britain refused to issue an export license for 45 cylinders of fluorine gas, which can be used to enrich uranium.

Algerian troops kill 6 militants

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian special forces killed six Muslim fundamentalists in a shootout at a mountain farm, the para-military gendarmes said on Tuesday.

Three of the nine-man group escaped; the force added that it gave no time for the shootout but said: "Identification of the six corpses is now being carried out."

The nine men came from the Blida-Medea area, a known fundamentalist region which, like the capital, Algiers, is under night curfew.

"The group of terrorists withdrew... to the Sidi Bel-Abbes region and was intercepted by a special unit of the army in a farm at Azhar Alail, 15 kilometres northeast of Djebel (mount) Tessala where it took refuge."

Washington welcomes Afghan peace pact

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States Monday welcomed a peace accord in Afghanistan that it said was a move towards a broad-based government, even though the agreement elevates to prime minister a hardline fundamentalist Washington has considered an extremist.

All the warring Afghan leaders signed a peace accord in Pakistan Sunday to end the months of fighting that has killed thousands in Kabul since last April, when the Mujahadeen overthrew the former communist government.

Under the agreement, fundamentalist President Burhanuddin Rabbani remains head of state for 18 months from last December, the date of his election by an assembly of nationwide representatives.

The radical Hezb-e-Islami party formally announced its hardline leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Mr. Rabbani's arch enemy, would take up the position of prime minister.

"We welcome any signs of progress. We always supported the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan that can bring peace to that area," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters.

He called the peace accord "a positive step forward" but added that "we also look for the establishment of a broad-based government that can really solve the differences."

Asked to comment about Mr. Hekmatyar getting the prime minister's post, Mr. Boucher said:

"I don't think I want to comment on particular individuals, but, as said, the more broad the representation and support for a government can be, the more likely it is to be able to resolve the fighting and the conflict out there."

In the 1980s, Mr. Hekmatyar's group received a large portion of the millions of dollars in U.S. aid that was funnelled through Pakistan to the Mujahadeen fighting what was then the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.

But he was increasingly viewed as a radical who was opposed to the United States. During the 1991 Gulf war, Mr. Hekmatyar backed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Asked if the new Clinton administration viewed Mr. Hekmatyar as the extremist he was considered to be by the Bush administration, Mr. Boucher said:

"The leaders of the government and the way they go forward is up to the Afghans to decide. I think when Hekmatyar had unleashed fighting against the capital, we've been clear to criticise that, and we have urged him and others to participate in the government to resolve these differences and to bring peace to Afghanistan. So that continues to be the position of the United States."

Militias surrender 7 to Lebanese army

BEIRUT (AP) — Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's government, struggling to restore control over the country, Tuesday won a significant victory when rival Shiite Muslim militias surrendered seven activists sought in a weekend shootout.

An army communiqué said three of the men belonged to the Iranian-backed Hizbollah, and four to the Syrian-supported Amal faction.

The army had threatened to use force to arrest the seven fugitives, who were among 18 Shiites involved in the shootout Saturday, that challenged the government's authority.

The other 11 wanted men had either been handed over to military authorities or been arrested in army raids.

It was not clear that the army planned to do with those apprehended.

Mr. Hariri sent the army into the south Beirut slums last December, the first time in a decade that the government had even tried to assert its control there. High-profile demonstrations of its authority are crucial to show that the government will not tolerate dissent.

Since the end of the civil war in October 1990, the government has dismantled all the major militias except Hizbollah.

The Tehran-backed movement refuses to hand over its weapons, claiming it needs them to fight the Israelis who occupy a border strip in South Lebanon — an argument the Beirut government finds it difficult to counter.

Saturday's firefight erupted out of an argument between Hizbollah and Amal activists. The two movements fought each other between 1987 and 1990 for control of Lebanon's 1.2 million Shiites.

the country's largest sect.

Two years ago, they signed a peace treaty arranged by Syria and Iran. But ideological differences still run deep and a resurgence of the intra-Shiite conflict would seriously undermine the Arab League-brokered agreement that ended the civil war and erode the credibility of Mr. Hariri's government.

For Mr. Hariri, reestablishing firm government control of the southern slums has significance far beyond domestic politics.

The slums, long a Hizbollah stronghold, are widely seen abroad as a haven for suicide bombers and hostage takers.

Restoring government authority there is vital to Mr. Hariri's efforts to show that Lebanon is no longer a terrorist sanctuary and to encourage badly needed investment from outside to help post-war reconstruction.

Weizman, hawk-turned dove, likely to be next Israeli president

By Eileen Alt Powell
The Associated Press

TEL AVIV — Ezer Weizman, a man known for his sharp tongue, has been holding it lately.

The one-time hawk, in recent years an outspoken advocate of negotiating peace with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), is expected to be elected Israel's seventh president later this month.

The job is largely ceremonial but Mr. Weizman's selection is seen as underscoring Israel's efforts towards peace with its Arab neighbours.

In the run-up to the March 24 vote, Mr. Weizman has taken a vow of silence on political issues, perhaps feeling his slangy one liners would not match the dignity of the office.

"I bet you expect me to say something off the cuff. No more. You can wait all you want," he recently teased reporters.

He told the Associated Press, "I'm not talking to anyone until after the election."

Parliament elects the president, and Mr. Weizman is the governing Labour Party's candidate. His election seems assured by a deal in which Labour backed the religious Shas party's nominee for chief rabbi last month in return for Shas' votes for Mr. Weizman.

The opposition Likud Party is running Bov Shilansky, a former parliament speaker. The five-year presidential term begins May 13.

The 68-year-old Weizman will be following in family footsteps as his late uncle Chaim Weizmann was the country's first president. Asked why his family's surname is spelled differently, Mr. Weizman cracked: "My father decided one 'N' was good enough for us."

Israel's president issues pardons, receives diplomats' credentials and represents the country at ceremonies. The head of government is the prime minister.

But the president can help set the tone of government. The current president, Chaim Herzog, is remembered for pardoning members of a Jewish underground cell that attacked Palestinians.

Nahum Barnea, a political columnist for the Hebrew daily Yedioth Ahronoth, thinks the choice of Mr. Weizman reflects a new mood in Israel.

"There is a change in the Israeli mainstream — more openness, more willingness to compromise with the Palestinians," Mr. Barnea said.

Dr. Ahmad Tibi, an Israeli Arab friend of Mr. Weizman, believes his election will send a strong signal to Arab states. "He has...the respect of the people

ish Air Force in World War II, helped found Israel's air force and was its commander during the 1967 Middle East war.

In 1977, he led the Likud election campaign that brought hardliner Menachem Begin to power. As defence minister, Mr. Weizman helped negotiate peace with Egypt. The friendship he formed with the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was said to be key to the 1979 peace agreement.

Then Mr. Weizman quit Mr. Begin's government in 1980 when it did not fulfil its promise of autonomy for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Many attribute his political shift to the hurt he felt over his only son, Shaul, who never fully recovered from wounds suffered in the early 1970s war of attrition with Egypt. Shaul died in an auto accident in 1991.

Mr. Weizman and his wife,



Ezer Weizman and the leaders of the Arab World," said Dr. Tibi.

The election marks a political comeback in a stormy career that saw Mr. Weizman switch from the hardline Likud to the left-centre Labour.

Born in Tel Aviv in 1924, Mr. Weizman was a pilot in the Brit-

ish Air Force in World War II, helped found Israel's air force and was its commander during the 1967 Middle East war.

In 1977, he led the Likud election campaign that brought hardliner Menachem Begin to power. As defence minister, Mr. Weizman helped negotiate peace with Egypt. The friendship he formed with the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was said to be key to the 1979 peace agreement.

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Mr. Weizman and his wife,

Reuma, also have a daughter, Michal.

Also a Labour government minister, Mr. Weizman was forced out of the decision-making "inner cabinet" in 1990 for reported contacts with the PLO.

In February 1992, he resigned from the government and politics, saying, "I no longer feel I can contribute."

He was emotional about his comeback on the night of his nomination for president.

"I am glad. I am satisfied," he told reporters, his voice cracking. Then added with characteristic humour: "I'm not really overcome with emotion. I just ran up the stairs so of course my voice is breaking."

Following are some of the comments by Mr. Weizman:

"Nothing contributes more to defence than peace. Let's try to talk to Arafat. We have one of the best air forces in the world, we have one of the best armies in the world. What the hell are we worried about?"

— About shifting from hawk to dove:

"I still call myself a hawk. A dove dills and coos, flitting about in besitation and uncertainty, while a hawk swoops down, seizes the initiative and takes advantage of changing situations to suit his cause."

— On his nomination to the presidency, held from 1949-52 by his uncle, Chaim Weizmann:

"I would have died to know what my uncle would have thought of me tonight. And if not my uncle, then at least my aunt."

— On his family name spelled differently from Weizmann, whose family emigrated from the Soviet Union:

"My father decided one 'N' was good enough for us. Anyway, I think he thought it sounded too German."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

TEL: 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00... 52 Star Line

19:00... News in French

19:15... Classical Music

19:30... News in Hebrew

20:00... News in Arabic

20:30... Saved by the Bell

21:00... Spotlight

21:30... After us the Deluge

22:00... News in English

22:30... Noble House

PRAYER TIMES

04:32... Fajr

05:49... Sunrise (Sunrise) Doha

11:46... Dhuhur

15:07... Asr

17:43... Maghreb

19:09... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 100740

Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624390

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

TELEPHONE

Terrazas Church Tel: 623266

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623441

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628433

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 653326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy and winds will be westerly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

MIN/Max, temp.

Amman... 5 / 13

Aqaba... 10 / 23

Deserts... 4 / 15

Jordan Valley... 09 / 22

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Aqaba 23. Humidity readings:

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ramzi Mizawi... 894788

Dr. Salman Daboudi... 776751

Dr. Mahmoud Al Abadi... 778959

Dr. Mahmoud Al Hindi... 637053

Firas pharmacy... 661912

Pendows pharmacy... 776336

Al Azzam pharmacy... 637053

Naroukh pharmacy... 626772

Al Salam pharmacy... 636790

Yacoub pharmacy... 644945

Shincoini pharmacy... 637660

Nafroth pharmacy... 626772

Najib pharmacy... 847632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre... 637111

Civil Defence Department... 661111

Civil Defence Immediate... 630341

Rescue Police... 02, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade... 891228

Blood Bank... 775121

Highway Police... 843462

Traffic Police... 896390

Public Security Department... 63031

Hotel Complaints... 605800

Price Complaints... 661176

Water and Sewerage... 661646

Complaints... 897467

Amman Municipality... 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)... 121

Overseas Calls... 010230

Central Amman Telephone... 623101

Abdull Telephone Repairs... 661101

Jordan Television... 773111

Radio Jordan... 774111

Water Authority... 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority... 815615

Electric Power Company... 634381

HOSPITALS

Queen tours child centre in Hanover

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday visited the Pergamon Museum in eastern Berlin, where the Mushatta facade is exhibited among other Islamic artifacts from various parts of the Middle East.

The Queen was received by the president of the Foundation of the Prussian Cultural Heritage and was guided through the tour by the director of the Museum for Islamic Art.

Accompanying the Queen on her tour were Jordanian and German officials.

Later in the day Her Majesty visited the Jordanian pavilion at the International Tourism Exchange, as well as other Arab pavilions.

In the evening the Queen attended a Jordanian reception hosted by minister of Tourism Yanal Hikmat and by Royal

Activists consider how to get women into Parliament

By Sausan Ghoshbeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the date for parliamentary elections nears, advocates of women's issues are pondering ways and means that would advance women's chances of getting into Jordan's 12th Parliament.

One idea that has been floated recently is granting women a quota share of seats in the Lower House. While proponents of the quota system describe it as a positive action, its opponents say that it would be undemocratic.

The quota system grants a number of positions for a certain group of people who otherwise would be discriminated against. It is incorporated in Jordan's Election Law, in order to ensure that minority groups such as Christians and Circassians are represented in Parliament.

According to the law, there are six seats for Christians, two for Circassians and one for Chechens.

Although women, theoretically, can take all the seats in Parliament, the current Parliament does not include a single woman.

Advocates of the quota system ask, if it is used to ensure that minorities participate in the decision-making process, shouldn't it also be used to accord women a share in that process?

"Although women are not a minority, they are at a political

disadvantage," says Arwa Al-Amiri, president of the Centre for Women's Studies.

Many Jordanians still perceive a woman's place is in the home. Even though women are increasingly becoming more visible in the public arena, they still only occupy lower level positions with few exceptions.

Eight women ran in the 1989 parliamentary elections, but none of them won. The eight ran as independents, and their campaigns were not supported by any party, society or women's organisations.

Furthermore, these women were attacked for emphasising women's concerns and their issues were belittled.

Emily Nafa, a political bureau member in the Jordanian Communist Party (JCP), explained that her party viewed the previous elections as an opportunity to advertise itself and decided to focus on the "political issues."

According to Suhair Al Tal, researcher and writer on women issues, many of the parties who describe themselves as "progressive" decided to increase their chances of winning by nominating men rather than implementing their programme and nominating several women.

Ms. Tal believes that the role of women in the 1989 elections was extremely weak. First, she said only a small number of women ran for elections. Second, women were not aware of their



All the members of the 80-seat Lower House of Parliament are male.

rights and their voting patterns portray that the majority of them did not enjoy independent thought and voted only for "their fathers," brothers or husbands' candidates.

This, she maintained, has "resulted in the majority in Parliament being unresponsive of women's issues."

Women activists believe that by entering Parliament women can defend their rights and participate in making the decisions that affect their lives. They accuse the current Parliament of neglecting women's issues and

weakening the civil status laws associated with women.

Critics of the quota system say that it is undemocratic. They believe that allocating seats in Parliament for women will deprive those men who are more qualified.

But feminists argue that there are women who are more qualified than men in Parliament. In addition, they say, the presence of women in the public arena will increase women's political, social and economical skills.

Women cannot develop while they are isolated from the public life, the feminists maintain.

Chairman of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), Ishak Al Farhan said he opposes the quota system because he perceives men and women as equals. He added that the inaction of the quota will portray women as inferior to men.

Ms. Tal disagrees. She said equality between men and women in accordance with existing laws is only "theoretical" and in reality discrimination against women is prevalent.

Some liberal women oppose the quota system fearing it will place mainly conservative women in Parliament, who, according to them, will sign away the remaining rights of women in Jordan.

Dr. Amiri believes that "this is not a good reason" to oppose the quota, and asks, should "the Parliament, as a whole, be abolished because conservatives are going to take the majority of the seats?"

Ms. Tal predicts that conservative women will be the first women in Parliament when the quota is enacted. This, she perceives as beneficial to the women's movement because the public will become accustomed to seeing women in such positions and thus will allow "in the long run, for more liberal women in these places."

Awareness Party chairman, Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, himself a deputy, believes the quota system will only benefit a minority of women — "those who work in the public arena." He said this representation of women will be "a fake one" since women will be ensured a place in Parliament by law, not by the choice of the people.

With no change to the present election law in the offing, the question remains whether women can reach Parliament without the quota system?

Many researchers of women's issues doubt that this is possible. They believe that one or two conservative women may be successful in achieving this goal, but theirs will be purely taken positions, serving to give the party that nominated them a liberal image or to attract women voters to that party.

None of the parties contacted by the Jordan Times indicated that they were planning to nominate a female member in the coming elections.

Women activists insist that government intervention is needed in order to help women reach Parliament, pointing out that it was only by a Royal Decree that women acquired political rights, or were appointed as ministers or senators.

Quota system supporters who spoke to the Jordan Times see it as a temporary process until society changes and women become incorporated in all aspects of life: until the public votes on issues without considering if the candidate is a man or a woman.



Munir Bashir performs tonight at the RCC

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Ammanites, and more particularly music lovers, are being treated to an exceptional week, featuring three high quality concerts, with an obvious programme peak Wednesday, Feb. 10, when Iraqi oud master Munir Bashir will perform at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) at 8:30 p.m.

The series started Monday with Al Kindi group and will end Saturday with Agnes Bashir in a piano recital. The concerts are presented by the National Music Conservatory of Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF).

Munir Bashir is much more than just an extremely talented performer and virtuoso. He is even more than a great musician, he is a great man.

Philosophers would rightly argue that one has to be a great man in order to be a great musician.

Mr. Bashir recently received, along with former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clarke, the prestigious "Cultural Communication between North and South" award, established by the Moroccan scholar, Mehdi Al Manjara, and based on the study of more than 71 international organisations.

As a player of the oud, Mr. Bashir has taken his technique to incredible limits, working on details that very few performers care about nowadays.

His interpretations reveal a superior form of sensitivity and expression. Mr. Bashir's music has implications that reach beyond even music itself.

His recordings and performances have been found to have healing properties and some specialists in California are seriously using them in musicotherapy.

Mr. Bashir's playing is based on this unique improvisational structure. He never plays exactly the same thing twice. Instead of rigid music scores, he creates an atmosphere, which he builds gradually and smoothly.

Mr. Bashir has the widest and most open concept of music, taken in its universal understanding. He has played with well-known Western ensembles, improvising on Bach's music for instance.

His latest recording "The Roots of Flamenco" is a huge

Women seek to end discrimination

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Women speakers this week criticised existing social values and laws as discriminating against women and called, in a lecture held at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation Sunday, for a continued struggle and more balanced legislation that would guarantee women their fundamental rights.

In presenting an overall view of Jordanian women's struggle to upgrade their status, Suhair Al Tal, a prominent Jordanian writer, did not forget to mention that it was by a Royal Decree that the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) came into existence (1954) as was the woman's right to vote and to stand for elections (1974) — the turning points in Jordanian women's history.

"It is true that formal governmental initiatives were behind women's achievements in Jordan," Ms. Tal said, adding that what the Jordanian women's movement is suffering from at present is partly attributed to women themselves who did not exert enough effort to induce any change.

"The Jordanian women's struggle throughout history proved its failure to introduce change or raise awareness among women of their rights," she said. "Women

are partly responsible."

Ms. Tal attributed this failure to dominant perceptions of women's role in society that are usually based upon a traditional, tribal or patriarchal-style of thinking.

Public Security Department (PSD) statistics regarding, for example, the incidents of wife-beatings or honour crimes show that these occurrences continue and at a large scale, Ms. Tal was quick to point out.

Parents are still disappointed when a girl is born and jubilant at the birth of a son.

School textbooks continue to portray women as housewives or as weak creatures who need the aid of "strong" men to rescue them from dangers or critical situations.

In poor families, female members often sacrifice their chance of acquiring a proper education to their brothers. Male applicants for scholarships are favoured over females.

In the workplace, not only do women take lesser wages than men for similar jobs, but factors such as their probable marriage or pregnancy often stand as alibis for arbitrary dismissal. "In addition to the declared and under-declared calls for women to leave work and stay at home," Ms. Tal said.

At the political level, women are for the most part, excluded from posts which would ensure their participation in decision-making.

Even the right to vote is still not fully exercised. Ms. Tal maintained that women's voting is largely dependent upon the desire of the tribe's sheikh or the head of the family.

Their lack of representation in the recently established political parties shows yet another sign of their absence in the political arena.

"Women were only remembered at the last minute to complete the numbers required for licensing," Ms. Tal said.

Although Article six in the Jordanian Constitution clearly stipulates that there is no discrimination among Jordanians, discrimination is institutionalised in many laws which directly or indirectly affect the rights of women in Jordan, as attorney, Fatima Qassad, said in the lecture.

In the Passports Law, for example, Article 12 says that the "wife and minor children can obtain an individual passport after the approval of the husband or the guardian." This article, according to Ms. Qassad, is in flagrant contradiction to the agreement on banning all sorts of discrimination against women which stipulates that all measures be adopted to ensure that women enjoy the same rights as men.

Violation of women's rights is reflected basically in the Civil Status Law, derived essentially from the Islamic Shari'a (Islamic law), "and which can therefore be amended," she said.

"How come the woman is considered fully eligible in the civil and commercial laws which give her the right to conduct contracts while she must have the approval of a guardian when signing the marriage contract?" Ms. Qassad questioned.

A participant commented that men also suffer from major gaps in the law. He criticised women's activities (lectures and meetings) as being "but a simple show where women come to socialise and where lecturers know nothing."

"It is true that social justice is absent for men and women alike," said Ms. Qassad in response.

But "injustice is doubled for women," she pointed out. "Laws are not a magic stick that would change things overnight, but they give a helping hand to acquire basic rights. This is not a social luxury, but it is part of our struggle to achieve social justice."

63.3% of deputies to run in November elections — survey

By Atallah Huneiti
Petra

AMMAN — A survey conducted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, last month revealed that 63.3 per cent of the members of the Lower House of Parliament will run for the next general elections scheduled for this November, and that the rest are still undecided.

A total of 60 out of 80 deputies participated in the survey, giving their views about their nomination for elections and other topics.

Among the participants were 18 deputies from Amman, 36 from the other governorates, and six deputies representing badia constituencies.

The survey included questions on such topics as the deputies' attitude vis-a-vis the democratic process in Jordan, the peace talks with Israel, the duties of the Lower House of Parliament, political parties, the voting procedures, and attendance of Parliament sessions.

With regard to the peace process, the survey showed that only 38 per cent of the deputies supported the negotiations. On the democratisation process only five per cent said they considered it very successful and 35 per cent said it was acceptable.

Only 10 per cent of those surveyed said the Lower House was performing its duty in an excellent manner; 46.7 per cent said the performance was good; and only 11.7 per cent believed that the political parties will determine the nature and representation in the next Parliament.

The survey also showed that 48.3 per cent of the deputies who plan to run in the November elections will raise the same slogans they raised in the 1989 elections, and 6.7 per cent have no intention of raising any slogan.

Only 23.3 per cent of the deputies covered in the survey believed that the present distribution of the parliamentary constituencies was sound and correct.

The survey also revealed that 1.7 per cent of the deputies believe that the Jordanian public has absolute trust in Parliament, and 10 per cent believed that Parliament's views had influenced the Jordanian political decision-making process.

At least 45 per cent of the surveyed deputies voiced their willingness to assume ministerial posts and 35 per cent said they demand that the three authorities — legislative, judiciary and executive — be totally separated.

A total of 3.3 per cent believed that the government information services and the media do cooperate with Parliament in an excellent manner and 30 per cent believed that such cooperation is below the acceptable level.

Meeting to design Jerusalem history courses

AMMAN (J.T.) — Delegates representing Jordanian and Palestinian universities are gathering at the Amman Philadelphia Hotel Wednesday evening for a symposium dedicated to the city of Jerusalem.

The main topic in the discussion is formulating a unified curriculum on the history of the holy city to be taught at Jordanian and

Palestinian universities before passing it on to the other Arab universities, according to the "Jerusalem Day" Committee which is organising the meeting.

The committee said the meeting is convened in implementation of resolutions passed by the third "Day of Jerusalem" conference held in Amman last October, calling on Jordanian and

Palestinian educational institutions to adopt a unified curriculum on Jerusalem and to conduct research studies on the holy city.

It said that the agenda on Wednesday also includes the question of publishing research work on Jerusalem and the prospect of issuing a periodical presenting further research work about the city.

Jerusalem Day Committee Chairman Subhi Ghoshbeh told the Jordan Times that Bethlehem, Najah and Birzeit Universities from the West Bank will be represented by two delegates each and the other universities in the occupied territories are unable to attend because they could not secure a permit to leave.

Kuwaiti 'princess' faces fraud charges

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A young girl who claimed to be the daughter of the emir of Kuwait and duped several Jordanians is under investigation after she was detained at one of Amman's five-star hotels, informed sources said Tuesday. She could face trial on charges of fraud, the sources said.

The girl was identified in a Jordanian document as Sausan Nayef Salim Al Madi, 20, born in Kuwait to Nayef Salim Al Madi, 48, a native of Nabulus in the occupied West Bank, the sources said.

Conflicting accounts of the girl's activities and her approach to sympathetic Jordanians emerged Tuesday.

Police sources said the girl was of Sudanese origin who had acquired Jordanian nationality. Local sources said, however, that the girl was of fair complexion unlike the dark features of Sudanese.

The girl checked into Amman Plaza Hotel 12 days ago, and was taken for questioning last Thursday shortly after she was reported to have claimed to be a member of the Kuwaiti royal family and recounting bizarre stories to those who came across her.

One of her stories, as told to the owner of a shop in the arcade of the hotel, was that she was living in fear of "Kuwaiti agents," who, she asserted, were after her for having married a Jordanian without her parents' consent, according to the sources, who

preferred anonymity.

The girl, who gave her name sometimes as "Bedour" and sometimes "Afra," claimed that she was a daughter of Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah born to a Spanish mother, and that she had fled Kuwait to join her Jordanian "husband," whom she identified as "Omar Hassan Al Jaabari," since her marriage did not have her parents' approval, the sources said.

She also carried business cards identifying her as "Her Highness Princess Afrah," daughter of Sheikh Jaber.

The "princess," who had checked into the hotel under her real name, wanted the shopkeeper to help her get in touch with Jordanian security forces so that she could explain the presence of "three bodyguards" in her hotel room.

The girl was reported to have told some of her other Jordanian "acquaintances" that she was a "prisoner" of her father in the hotel and she wanted help to get out.

There was no immediate explanation of how she managed to make the story convincing since she was moving around freely in and out of the hotel.

The shopkeeper, apparently wishing the girl well, complied with her request, but unwittingly blew the whistle on her by not only alerting hotel security but also the official security authorities.

When hotel security men questioned the girl on Wednesday — one day before police entered the

picture and detained her — the girl produced her actual identity card, which totally discredited her story since she was claiming that she had a Kuwaiti diplomatic passport.

Furthermore hotel security men also came across a man who could have been her actual father in her hotel room.

"During a brief questioning the man produced his Jordanian ID card which identified him as Nayef Salim Al Madi, an auto-mechanic, and he said he was working in Kuwait," said one of the sources.

"He left the hotel shortly thereafter and has not been seen in the hotel since then," added the source.

"The girl's elegant appearance and distinct Kuwaiti accent helped her a lot in convincing others of her story," said the source. "Sometimes she used to wear the typical Kuwaiti robes and she really looked like a royal."

Several Jordanians were apparently duped into giving her money and buying her clothes and expensive meals, according to the source. "Apparently she told them she was awaiting a bank transfer of \$50,000 which should reach her anytime. In the meantime she requested them for interim financial help."

"There was no problem with the hotel accounts as such," the source told the Jordan Times. "She used to make payments every two days and her account was completely settled when she was taken away for questioning."

The girl used to hire hotel taxis and tell the drivers that she could not pay their charges immediately since "the expected transfer of \$50,000 had not reached her bank."

"Some of the drivers — who obviously believed her story of being a member of the Kuwaiti royal family — even offered to lend her money until the bank transfer reached her," said the source.

At one point, "two elderly Jordanians also gave her money — JD 1,000 in one case — and also took a trip to the airport to receive her mother who never turned up," according to the source.

"One of the girl's Jordanian acquaintances telephoned someone known to him in the Kuwaiti royal family and was told that the family had no knowledge whatsoever of such a 'princess'," said the source.

The Kuwaiti embassy in Amman said it had no comment on the affair.

The girl was reported to have told police after her arrest that she and her father were living in Kuwait and that she was "assaulted" and deported from Kuwait following the Gulf war which liberated the emirate from a seven-month Iraqi occupation beginning August 1990.

The girl remained in detention Tuesday. It was not immediately known whether her father was located or whether her "husband" was also called in for questioning, if indeed such a person did exist.

Ministry to take census of handicapped children

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development is preparing a list of handicapped children under the help of a special questionnaire distributed in different parts of the country. Director of the Special Education Department at the Ministry of Social Development Amal Nahhas said the questionnaire will also aim at providing help to these children and at a later stage give them a proper education, vocational training and employment.

Mrs. Nahhas said that 5,000 handicapped children have been registered with the ministry to date.

She added that the handicapped have been receiving training for the past years, and said that handicapped children are given education and training at special classes at schools run by the Ministry of Education.

These centres of schools provide training according to set programmes designed to rehabilitate the handicapped in a manner that would help them to adapt to their needs.

Administered by specialists, the centres also offer advice and instruction to parents of handicapped children, Mrs. Nahhas said.

The special education schools run by the ministry offer male and female handicapped children a choice of 15 trades which are in demand in the local labour market, she added.

To further facilitate the life of handicapped adults, the Ministry of Social Development has been arranging for their special cars to be exempt from customs duty. According to Mrs. Nahhas, 503 such vehicles have been exempted to date.

Currently, the Ministry of Social Development is implementing "an early diagnosis programme" to detect any disability among children. The programme is being implemented under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in different government schools. Mrs. Nahhas said.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Crown Prince condoles Sawalha family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday delegated Deputy Director of his office Abdullah Kanaan to convey his condolences to the Sawalha family on the death of Hanna Khalil Sawalha.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- Exhibition of handicrafts by Jordanian artist Dana Ahmad Khreis at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition entitled "The Present Islamic World in Photos and News" at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST).

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Economic Forum

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

Economics of monopoly and tuition fees

THE SHOCKINGLY steep increase in tuition fees announced, or intended to be announced, by the New English School offers an interesting opportunity to evaluate the behavior of the private sector in a deregulated market where the government does not fix prices. The evaluation will hold true even if the planned increase will be cancelled or adjusted.

The purported fees increase is around 30-60 per cent. Nothing justifies such a price hike, certainly not in a single year and particularly in Jordan. The prices of inputs that go into the educational process could not have risen by anything like that. The whole thing will take on a bizarre appearance if we remember that the price level in Jordan has just subsided to 4 per cent.

Good-intentioned persons will be easily tempted to invoke the traditions of free marketism to justify the exceptional fees rise. That would be a mistake: What we face here is an act that violates the spirit of free markets. It is a monopolistic situation.

In a market economy, the buyer or consumer who does not like the price or cannot afford it can switch to another producer who offers the goods or service under question at lower prices. As demand thus diminishes for his products, the first producer will cut the price to boost demand. This very basic part of the market mechanism is stalled in the present case of the New English School.

Students in, say, the fourth or seventh class who, or whose parents, do not like, or cannot afford, the new fee levels cannot quit the school. They simply have become accustomed to certain

norms in this school and they will not be easily incorporated, if they ever are, in other schools with different systems. In other words, they do not enjoy the freedom of choice which propels the market mechanism. This is monopoly.

The market economy tolerates all sorts of economic freedom but not monopolistic practices such as the one under discussion. If it acts to counteract this situation, the government will not be breaching free market teachings but will, on the contrary, be abiding by them. Monopoly itself is the worst form of economic suppression.

The government, under a market economy, is not a neutral force. The non-interventionist role it assumes is one bordered on each side by its duty to prevent anarchy, foul play, exploitation and monopoly. Such a role is only equally matched by its supervisory and disciplinary duties.

The sad event of propping up tuition fees by a wild 30-60 per cent in one gulp is additionally a reminder of the preparedness of certain private business to go very far after profits.

The fact that this is being done by an educational firm makes things much more troublesome. Education is not a luxury, certainly not up to the secondary level. It will be even sadder if the government opts not to intervene in this and similar conditions where there exists an abused conception of economic freedom, and irrespective of monopoly.

A sudden 30-60 per cent price rise is not justified by any economic criteria.



An effective peace enforcement mechanism

A U.N. command for military forces

By Frederick Bonhart

BRUSSELS—The need has now been recognised for an international military force to monitor and enforce any agreement that may be made between the warring parties in former Yugoslavia.

Readiness to participate in such a force has been declared by the United States and most of its North Atlantic Treaty partners, as well as by Russia and several of the former neutral nations.

So an adequate number of forces from different countries is available. The missing requirement is a common command structure.

Any peace agreement will leave disruption and economic dislocation in addition to the depredation caused by the fighting, population shifts, terror and looting. Big stocks of weapons will remain in the hands of unruly gangs. Shortages of food, fuel and other essentials will encourage the rise of a black market and lawlessness. Whatever central government arises will be weak.

The international force would thus be responsible for maintaining order in a devastated land where the fierce antagonisms will not have been laid to rest. Common rules of engagement and behaviour for all military forces present would have to be established and applied without fail.

Forces would have to be ready to be engaged, complete with combat and logistic support, to deal with any flare-up.

All this requires a unitary chain

of command reaching from a political authority, assisted by a military staff, down to a single field commander to whom all forces are subordinated.

Such a command system exists in NATO, and arrangements could be made to integrate non-NATO forces. Russia, in particular, would be an essential partner, both from a political and a military point of view. But it is clearly impossible politically to place all cooperating forces under the organisation's command.

NATO cannot appear to become the world's policeman. This role is properly that of the United Nations.

All potential participants now appear to have accepted this. The Russian government agreed on Feb. 24 to the establishment of a multinational U.N. force, and stated its readiness to involve the mechanism of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). The council was set up in December 1991 to establish links between NATO and the former Warsaw Pact countries.

Cooperation in peacekeeping activities, including planning, training and exercises, was agreed on at the council's last ministerial meeting. Reports have been received of recent Russian approaches in Geneva and in New York to establish such cooperation in the case of Yugoslavia.

A U.N. command system could now be designed rapidly by using the NATO model and facilities, and by reviving a U.N. body. The Security Council has a Military

Staff Committee on which the chiefs of defence staff of the permanent member countries are represented, but which has never functioned. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has called for its activation.

NATO has repeatedly stated readiness to provide whatever support the United Nations requires. Senior alliance planners arrived in New York last week to discuss such plans.

The Security Council would have to establish an operational committee in permanent session to provide the overall political control. The military advice and technical supervision would be supplied by a revitalised Military Staff Committee.

If this body had the support of NATO's command structure, the required procedures, expertise and facilities would be immediately available. Technical staff, intelligence and communications equipment and personnel, as well as contingency plans, could be provided quickly. Qualified senior officers from non-NATO countries could easily be accommodated.

An overall force commander could then be appointed for the operation in the Balkans. Although NATO forces would be in the majority, he should preferably be from another nationality — perhaps the Swedish general, Lars Erik Wahlgren, who was recently appointed to command U.N. forces in former Yugoslavia, with a NATO deputy. He could be supported by a NATO

headquarters element, similar to that now serving the U.N. protection force in Bosnia.

The principle of internationality would thus be fully respected, and all countries sending forces would be able to do so in the knowledge that they were placing them under the command only of the United Nations. Similarly, all people of the former Yugoslavia could rely on the impartiality of the force, and cooperation would be easier to obtain.

This system would require agreement by the permanent members of the Security Council. No problem would exist for four of them, as the United States, Britain and France are NATO members and Russia would become a major player in an operation in which it has so far been involved only at the political level.

China would be under strong political and moral pressure to agree; it would have the endorsement of international respectability and the prospect of rapprochement with the West.

The commitment would be arduous, costly and probably long. But its success could provide the model for regulating conflicts on an international basis in the future. If established permanently, this system could save much bloodshed and misery.

The writer is editor of NATO's Sixteen Nations, an independent military journal. The article is reprinted from The International Herald Tribune.

World Trade Centre blast

A hint of what's to come?

By Richard Pyle
 The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The investigation skills and luck that cracked the World Trade Centre bombing case have not dispelled the greater fear of U.S. law enforcement: That Americans may be facing a wave of organised terrorism on their own home ground.

Although Americans and their institutions have been victimised in scores of bombings, skyjackings, assassinations and other politically driven acts of violence over the past 25 years, few have occurred in the United States itself. Officials credit this to several factors: The distance from the centres of revolutionary ferment, the easy availability of U.S.-related targets abroad, Washington's tough anti-terrorism policy of no negotiations and swift armed retaliation, and the efficiency of its law enforcement in solving such crimes.

But with the end of the Cold War unleashing a new surge of nationalist and religious zealotry around the globe, officials say there is no reason to assume the brazen attack on a symbolic heart of capitalist democracy was simply an isolated event.

A day after the Trade Centre Blast, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo said it was "just a hint of what they have grown accustomed to in some other great nations, like Britain." He added, "I don't expect that we'll ever see things like that here. We are stronger than that, and we have better law enforcement."

In an ABC-TV interview Sunday, former CIA Director Robert Gates called Iran responsible for most Middle East terrorism at present, but said it was "too early to say" whether such activity was coming to U.S. shores.

Others, closer to the smell of death in the trade centre's shattered underground garage, are less optimistic.

An FBI tabulation for 1987-91 listed 34 "terrorist incidents" in the United States, mostly vandalism or sabotage, with no deaths or injuries. Twenty-three were related to Puerto Rico.

Even so, more serious activity is not unknown in the United States. The 20th century has witnessed scores of bombings against politicians, diplomats, judges, government agencies and private companies.

Bombs exploded in or near the U.S. Senate in 1915, 1975 and 1983; in the Wall Street area in the 1920s and 1975, and at New York's LaGuardia airport in 1975. Although various groups claimed responsibility for some acts, international ties are rarely proven.

LETTERS

Royal Jordanian's dilemma

To the Editor:

IT IS with utter amazement that I read an article in your Arabic sister daily Al Rai' about Royal Jordanian's dilemma when "compelled" to employ expatriate air hostesses. Their long-established presence has always been a welcome complement to the local workforce. However, the recent uproar is the result of the salary proposed to the latest recruits, mainly Irish.

The answers of RJ Vice President Munib Toukan to the questions asked in the media is nothing less than an insult to the intelligence of those of us who are better informed. Allow me to point out the following: all of course in the spirit of the prevailing atmosphere of democracy and free speech.

1. RJ's contention that expatriate air hostesses are essential to facilitate communication with passengers aboard its international flights to the USA and the Far East would be valid were it not for the fact that mastery of the English language is a prerequisite for the employment of Jordanian cabin crew.

Will somebody please explain to me what difference English-speaking Irish hostesses would make? Unless of course they are also all fluent in the Indian, Sri Lankan, Thai, Malay and Indonesian languages. Moreover, all of RJ's cabin crews eventually fly on all its routes which makes the comparison with British Airways (BA) recruitment of 140 Japanese air hostesses invalid because BA actually flies its Japanese air hostesses only on their London Tokyo route.

2. Mr. Toukan also denies that the expatriate air hostesses will be paid \$1,000. The advertisement in an Irish newspaper states clearly that the salary will be \$12,000 per annum tax free. The contract will undoubtedly show a basic salary of \$700 per month as he claims, but he has found it convenient not to mention the additional \$300 that will be paid in lieu of accommodation. (As though the Jordanian cabin attendants do not have to pay the same exorbitant rents in Amman, or are they condemned to live with their parents for the rest of their working lives?)

3. On page 8 of the same Al Rai' newspaper, RJ is advertising for Jordanian air hostesses offering a salary of JD 245 per month. An extra two months salary bonus plus RJ's contribution to the provident fund do in fact translate into around JD 300 gross per month. Mr. Toukan finds this figure close to the salary offered to the expat hostess (at the present the \$700 dollars figure).

Please give us a break! 4. For those who find the above preposterous, let me bring up the matter of the Jordanian air stewards. Suffice to say that they in turn earn JD 50 per month less than the Jordanian air hostesses. You do not have to be Einstein to figure out that Jordanian air stewards will be earning less than 1/3 of the salary of expatriate hostesses, and to add insult to injury these stewards, some with over 15 years of service to the airline, will be required to train and supervise the new recruits during their flying duties. Justice at its best.

5. RJ's pilots are also dismayed and feel insulted by this new arrangement. A career in the cockpit normally starts at the rank of pilot-in-command. To get there, one would have spent no less than JD 25,000 over a period of no less than two years' training, with innumerable and gruelling exams, tests and medicals along the way.

If at the end of it one is lucky enough to be employed by RJ one will find one's gross monthly income far less than the \$1,000 paid to the expatriate hostess.

This figure in fact comes close to the salary of a first officer, the number two man on board an airliner. Where then is the job recognition and status? How would these pilots feel when they are served by ladies earning more than themselves? (No disrespect to anybody).

6. For those who think this is too much of a fuss over 18 Irish hostesses, rumour has it that they are only the first batch of many already working at RJ, happily for around \$500 per month, will be moving to the new pay scale upon renewal of their contracts. Mabrouk to all Irish, Indian, Egyptian, Tunisian etc. hostesses in better salaries, seems to have won the lottery when it comes to alongside your Jordanian colleagues.

7. As to the argument that RJ is unable to fill all the vacancies with Jordanians, surely such a claim can only stand when fail to respond. What is happening is bound to further discourage Jordanians aspiring to become hostesses.

All indications are that RJ, by doing this, could lose credibility and, more importantly, the loyalty of its Jordanian air crews that to privatisation.

Carol Deakin,
 Amman.

People are the final arbiter

THE LATEST peace agreement between Afghanistan's rebels and government declaring a truce before beginning the process of healing between them is a test not only for the sincerity of the warring factions to end their internecine fighting but also for the clout of several Muslim nations that pulled off the accord.

In addition to Pakistan, the architect of the original peace plan that culminated in power-sharing among the various groups, both Saudi Arabia and Iran are now exercising influence not only on the principal rebel groups but also on the other splinter ones. Under the negotiated agreement arrived at in Islamabad Sunday, Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and his archrival Gulbuddin Hekmatyar will share power and appoint a mutually acceptable cabinet in a manner that reflects the extent of the pulls and pushes of Riyadh, Tehran and Islamabad in the post Communist era Afghanistan.

What complicates the already complex formula for peace in the country is the existence of no less than 10 groups vying for power and influence in the running of the country prior to the adoption of the projected new constitution for the country.

This dimension of the conflict has yet to be put to the ultimate test. The other greater challenge comes from the people themselves. For despite the fact that the various Afghan leaders, who accepted and signed the ceasefire accord, have been summoned by Riyadh to swear allegiance to the peace plan at Islam's holiest shrine in Mecca, there is every reason to suspect that the agreement could unravel in the upcoming months unless the people of Afghanistan themselves are made the final arbiters of the military and political solution struck among their leaders.

Gone are the days when externally brokered peace agreements can be expected to hold when they are not put to a true democratic test at the level of the people. More than half a dozen ceasefire accords had been signed in the past in Afghanistan but failed because they were not arrived at with due consideration given to the wishes of the Afghan people themselves. If the latest peace efforts are to succeed permanently, there is going to be an urgent need to accelerate the process that would involve the people in its implementation. Translated into actual deeds, the people of Afghanistan must be afforded an early opportunity to elect a democratically chosen parliament on the basis of pluralism and national reconciliation.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

EVER SINCE the collapse of world Communism and the former Soviet bloc, the Western media, particularly that in the United States, have been waging a hostile campaign against Islam, trying to depict the faith as the enemy of nations and the source of regional and international terrorism, said Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily Tuesday. The paper said that the hostile media have been exploiting certain acts of violence committed by extremist factions whose actions are not in harmony with the Islamic faith and religious principles. It said that the U.S.-led campaign has been aimed at painting a very ugly picture of Islam to security and stability. The New York blast peace opened the appetite of this hostile media to launch attacks on the Muslims even though no conclusive evidence has been found that could pin this horrible action on Muslims, the paper pointed out. It said that Islam condemns terrorism and fights against it, but extremist groups could be exploiting Islam to carry out such atrocities. The paper expressed the view that the New York blast carries the hall mark of world Zionism, which has been spearheading the anti-Islam campaign around the world and running a hostile media against the Arab and Islam countries in general. Indeed, added the paper, this blast is now triggering a new Zionist-Western campaign designed to smear the name of Islam and the Arab and Muslim people around the world.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour said that the results of the trade union elections in Jordan can by no means reflect the actual political situation nor should they be considered as indicators of the outcome of the coming parliamentary elections. The rejoice of blocs whose members win such elections can only be described like the joy that overwhelms sports clubs when they win a championship but no more, said Mohammad Ibrahim Daoud. The writer said that most, if not all, the elections held by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, professional unions and others had been influenced by traditional social and tribal considerations. Jordanians are not yet politically mature to discard the influence of relatives and tribes when casting ballots; and the democratic process is not deeply rooted in the minds of the majority of the electorate, claimed the writer. He said the coming general elections, like the trade unions elections, are bound to remain under the traditional influences. The long absence of political parties from the Jordanian political scene has had its deep effect on society, which lacks clear vision about political life and subsequently one can only conclude that such situation does not create an opportune climate for a real and drastic change in social thinking, the writer added.

Maastricht Treaty

A tough test in German court

By Richard Murphy
 Reuter

BONN — Could the Maastricht Treaty ultimately come to grief in Germany, the self-styled motor of European integration?

Diehard German opponents of the treaty hope so.

They are fighting a rearguard action in the constitutional court in Karlsruhe, Germany's highest court, to have the treaty blocked on the grounds that it would undermine democracy and national sovereignty.

Their action raises the intriguing possibility that Germany, rather than Maastricht laggards Britain and Denmark, could be one of the very last European Community (EC) members to complete ratification — or even that it might not do so at all.

Both houses of parliament ratified the blueprint for political and economic union amid much fanfare in December, but President Richard von Weizsaecker, acting

on government advice, has still not signed the formal "instruments of ratification."

He is waiting for the constitutional court to rule on complaints by several dozen individuals and the far-right Republican party challenging the treaty as unconstitutional.

The treaty cannot come into force until all 12 EC states have deposited their instruments of ratification with the Italian government, where they will be held in the archives alongside the EC's Rome Treaty.

"Under national law, ratification has been completed and is being implemented," says Mr. Weizsaecker's spokesman Hans-Henning Horstmann. "Under international law, this will happen when the constitutional court has given its ruling."

Ironically, the leading German opponent of the treaty is a former top "Eurocrat", Manfred Brunner.

He was cabinet chief in the office of EC Commission Vice-President Martin Bangemann until the two parties company last year because of "fundamental differences" over the treaty.

Mr. Brunner says the treaty infringes on human rights and violates fundamental principles of the German constitution.

His lawyer, Karl Albrecht Schachtschneider, will try to persuade the court that German democracy is threatened by the transfer of authority to a community dominated by heads of government who can ride roughshod over a weak European Parliament.

"The threat is of what I have called a Europe of Fuehrers," he said, using the word for leader which Adolf Hitler bestowed on himself.

"The Germans decided to establish a German state, the Federal Republic of Germany. If they want a different state, a United Europe, they must decide

again by means of a new constitution," he said.

The government, proud of its boast that Germany ratified the treaty before the original deadline of Dec. 31, 1992, plays down the significance of the court cases and dismisses speculation that German ratification could be jeopardised.

"We are very confident that it will go ahead," says foreign Foreign Ministry spokesman Juergen Pfeifer.

Guenter Verheugen, chairman of parliament's European affairs committee, is also unconcerned. "I see no problem at all," he says.

He noted that Bonn's 1949 constitution contains an explicit commitment to European union and said the constitutional amendments took account of previous rulings on European integration from Karlsruhe.

"Of course, the treaty infringes the principles of democracy and federalism of our constitution," he said.

U.S. to issue invitations to talks

(Continued from page 1)

policy of banning contacts with the (PLO) despite Britain's decision to resume high-level talks with the group.

"No, we're going to continue our same policy with respect to that," he said when asked if a change was contemplated.

"The effort that was made to have meetings with Mr. Arafat, I think, resulted in our disappointment at their failure to assist us on terrorism matters," he told reporters during a picture-taking session with Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo.

"So, we're going to continue, at least for the time being, with

our present policy," Mr. Christopher added.

The U.S. position is a bit more muddled than Mr. Christopher's statements would make it seem, however.

Although direct contacts with the PLO are forbidden, U.S. officials, including former Secretary of State James Baker, have had frequent meetings with the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks even though it is an open secret that the delegation is advised by the PLO.

Israel has accepted the Palestinian delegates as participants in the peace talks.

U.S. officials believe a change now in policy towards the PLO could upset the peace talks.

By Farida Burtis

NEW YORK — Standing side by side for Friday prayers in the Islamic Cultural Centre mosque were Kuwaitis, Iraqis and Kurds, Jordanians, Palestinians, Kenyans and Americans. For the duration of prayers the atmosphere was one of peace and unity — in contrast to the turbulent political conflicts and turmoil in some of the countries represented.

"The new mosque is a place for information, a place to correct the image of Islam and to bring Muslims and non-Muslims together," said Abdul Rahman Osman of Egypt, the mosque imam, during an interview and tour of the Islamic Cultural Centre.

Completed over a year ago, the mosque is part of the Islamic Cultural Centre located on Third Avenue and 96th Street on New York's upper east side.

Although there are over two dozen places where Muslims say prayers, this is the first building constructed as a mosque. A common place for Muslims to offer prayers has been a penthouse room at the U.N.'s Dag Hammarskjöld library building.

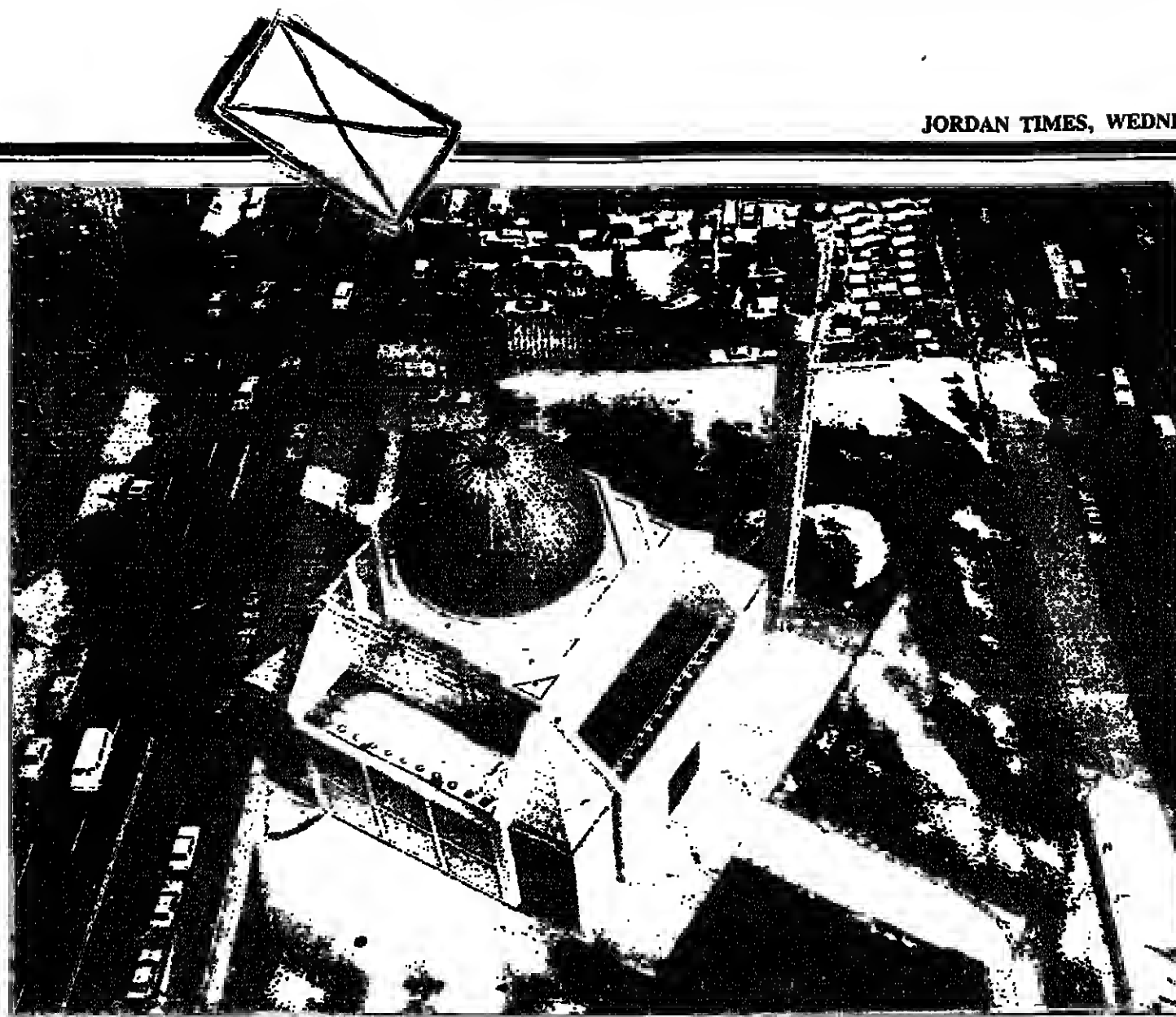
Sheikh Osman, who was previously a director of the Islamic Centre located on the west side of New York, added, "Islam is misunderstood in this part of the world." He says the presence of the Islamic Cultural Centre creates a better understanding.

"People are surprised and happy at the answers they receive," he explained. "They realise Islam is a very rational and progressive religion."

A recent estimate based on U.S. census figures projects that 3.5 million Muslims live in the U.S. about 400,000 Muslims reside in the New York area. The number is expected to increase as more immigrants from Islamic countries come to the U.S.

"The mosque fulfills a very important function," Mr. Osman said. "In this part of the world there are so many temptations, especially for young people. People have to learn the right values in dealing with such influences."

Dr. Mohammad Salem Agwar, a former professor of



The new mosque in New York

New mosque is symbol of Islam in America

Egypt's Al Azhar University, is also imam at the mosque and directs the activities of the centre. Plans are under way to build a school on the premises.

Dr. Agwar expects construction to be completed "in a couple of years."

At present, nearly 200 people come to the Islamic Cultural Centre to learn Arabic. Classes are held in the basement of the multi-story building. Among those who visit the Islamic Centre are individuals who hope to convert to Islam or expect to marry Muslims. The centre houses a library with about 400 books that visitors can consult. Dr. Agwar says the

library will be expanded soon so that books can be checked out.

The month of Ramadan, which started Feb. 22, is a particularly busy time for the Islamic Centre.

Dr. Agwar says that every day during Ramadan there will be a lecture and recitation from the Qur'an. The end of Ramadan will be marked by the celebration of Eid-Al-Fitr, which is expected to take place on March 22. Over 2,000 people offer Friday prayers every week, and a larger number is expected to celebrate the end of fasting, said Dr. Agwar.

The head of the board of trustees of the Islamic Cultural Centre, Mohammad Abdullah

Abdullhassan, is Kuwait's ambassador to the U.N. he says with satisfaction that the construction of the mosque was a "historic" event after years of delay.

Originally put on the drawing board years ago by ambassadors of Islamic countries to the U.N., the project did not enter the construction phase until 1987. The mosque was a year late in opening because Kuwait funding — more than three-quarters of the \$17 million pledged for the project — came to an abrupt halt after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Although the copper dome and gold-topped minaret mark the un-

derstandable presence of a mosque against the New York City skyline, the minaret is essentially symbolic. As a result of the city's zoning laws, the mosque's board of trustees agreed that the minaret — or call to prayer — would not be heard beyond the mosque's compound.

The mosque represents a blending of Islamic design with contemporary architecture in creating "a mosque for the 21st century," said architect Michael McCarthy. The wall that is oriented toward Mecca has several layers of pale green glass panels with gold accessories. Individually, each panel looks

almost clear, but the cumulative effect of the glass layers is water-like, pale green translucent.

The wall is framed in g calligraphy. Its glass panels; the front entrance are decorated with a contemporary, geometric design composition based on petition of a simple square greenish-white, semi-opaque; our. There is no traditional mosaic as a cartouche, shamsa arabesque.

The calligraphy itself is a blend of traditional and futuristic signs. The letters are bold angular, as in 9th century K Arabic script, but Mr. McCarthy refers to them as "computer generated" — a computer print was used as the base for calligraphy. Modern elements found in the use of monochromatic design, straight lines and simple forms.

Extensive use of glass for lights allows daylight to pour into the main area used for prayers. The pale green interior walls are divided into large squares around which are translucent glass borders. Numerous lights are suspended from the ceiling, encircling the interior of the dome.

In addition to the main prayer hall of the mosque where men offer prayers, women can pray on the balcony. The central washrooms — unlike U washrooms — have facilities for women, or ablution, a ritual conducted before offering prayer.

During this reporter's visit, Indonesian Muslim and American fiancée stopped Sheikh Osman's office to request information about Islam compared to Christianity and Judaism. In response to questions from the American visitor Sheikh Osman quoted a line from Chapter II, verse 256 of the Qur'an. "There is no compulsion in religion."

He then showed her verse 6: the same chapter and read aloud "Those who are the Jews, Christians and Sabaeans — whose believeth in God and the last and doth right — surely it reward is with their Lord."

World News Link.

FBI says 'large group' behind blast

(Continued from page 1)

America is vulnerable to domestic terrorism — the World Trade Centre bombing clearly shows that we are — but rather, what are we prepared to do about it?" Mr. Schumer said.

Mr. Sessions also gave assurances that the bombing would not be used to justify interfering in the lives of people merely because of their nationality or religious beliefs.

A Jordanian citizen of Palestinian origin, Mohammad Salameh, and Egyptian-born Ibrahim Al Gahrowny have been arrested in the case involving the Feb. 26 bombing.

Much of the discussion at the hearing revolved around a Muslim cleric, Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, who preaches in mosques in the New York area.

Sheikh Omar stood trial and was acquitted a decade ago in connection with the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat but was allowed into the United States by mistake, according to the State Department's coordinator for counter-terrorism, Thomas McNamara.

Mr. McNamara said that although the sheikh had been on a "watch list" he was given an entry visa by the U.S. embassy in Khartoum in 1990. The visa was revoked later that year but he later received a resident alien green card.

When that status was revoked, he applied for political asylum from Egypt and the case re-

mained before the U.S. courts.

The Washington Post reported that Mr. Salameh, who was arrested March 4 and charged with "aiding and abetting the bombing," is considered a relatively marginal figure in the attack, and law enforcement officials acknowledge that evidence against him is largely circumstantial.

Mr. Gahrowny, is being held on a charge that he obstructed justice when federal agents came to search his home after finding Mr. Salameh had listed his address on a driver's licence application. It is not clear what evidence, if any there is that he is involved in the bombing and he has not been charged in the larger case.

The FBI said Monday that more search warrants and arrest warrants could be issued this week.

Workers beneath the trade centre, meanwhile, continued to inch into the wholly blast crater, which is expected to hold a wealth of information, said Mr. Fox of the FBI.

"When they finally get in there, they're going to look like a colony of ants going after sugar," he said.

In other developments, Mr. Salameh got into a scuffle Monday in the federal jail in Manhattan. Mr. Salameh fought with guards after they gave him underwear that was too large and socks that were too small, said his lawyer, Robert Precht. Mr. Precht said Mr. Salameh was not seriously hurt.

Egyptian militants go on trial in court

(Continued from page 1)

Before the trial started in a theatre at the Haeckstap army barracks, on a desert highway 40 kilometres northeast of Cairo, the defendants boasted of their accomplishments with the statement.

The men, most bearded, some in white galabiyas, others in Western-style suits, interrupted their chanting long enough for Abdul Zaher, an engineer, to read it.

"What is the Al Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic Group)?" he asked. "It is led by Dr. Omar Abdul Rahman. It killed Sadat after he rejected the rule of God."

Defence lawyers tried to get him to stop, but he ignored them. "If terrorism and extremism means legitimate self-defence and the defence of our religion and honour, then welcome terrorism."

Egyptian courts have acquitted Sheikh Abdul Rahman, who has lived in the United States for more than three years, three times of charges related to extremist acts, including ordering Mr. Sadat's death.

After the statement was read

and during a court adjournment for noon prayers, defendant Mustafa Sayed, a lawyer, reiterated: "There is only one Al Gama'a Al Islamiya, and Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman is our emir (leader)."

The first trial session, which lasted almost two hours, was mainly procedural. The military judge adjourned the trial to March 13.

In their statement, the defendants said that they were attacking tourism in Egypt to destabilise the economy and the government. They said the violence was also spurred by the government's "horrible" torture of detainees and its long-term detention of suspects without due process. They claimed the government has held up to 4,000 suspects without trial over the past four years.

Since the beginning of 1992, the militants have waged an escalated violence campaign to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak's secular government and replace it with an Iran-like theocracy. To date, a total of 95 people have been killed and 166 wounded in the violence.

PLO and Hamas resume dialogue

(Continued from page 1)

The last straw, however, was when they appealed to Syria," added the official.

Ties between the PLO leadership and the Syrian government also remain strained. Relations appeared to thaw last year; the level of animosity between the two seems to continue.

"When the expellees made a statement at the end of February appealing to Syria and basically calling Syria their protector that was the last straw," said the official, referring to expellee spokesman Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi's remarks that he hoped Syria would "fulfill our hopes of a quick and collective return."

The appeal to Syria was seen by the PLO as a slap in the face. Syria is thought to be the Arab country closest to an agreement with the Israelis but it hosts and encourages anti-peace talk

Palestinian parties which are based in Damascus.

The PLO sees Syria bosting of some friendly and onfriendly opponents of Fateh group as "a double-edged sword."

"We have no trouble with the concept of some Palestinian groups being based in Damascus but the inter-Palestinian dialogue must remain amicable and that has not always been the case," said the Amman-based PLO official.

By appealing to Syria, Hamas hit a raw nerve of the PLO.

The PLO feels it is its "duty" to continue its contacts and dialogue with Hamas, because "the PLO is the representative of all Palestinians and Hamas is Palestinian," said the official. "It is not going to make any concessions to Hamas over issues of representation in the Palestine National Council."

"There will be no compromise,

they were offered 12 seats in the PNC and they can take it or leave it," said the Amman-based PLO official.

Political analysts close to Hamas have said that the organisation has changed its approach vis-a-vis its role in the PNC. "They will wait till an agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians is made and then join the Palestinian parliament. Thus they won't be held responsible for the outcome of the talks," said the senior PLO member.

Mr. Nazzari said the "issue of joining the PNC is not a priority right now."

A recent opinion poll conducted by the Jerusalem-based Jerusalem Centre for Information and Communication indicated that 58.1 per cent of the Palestinians in the occupied territories considered the PLO to be the representative of the Palestinian people while 12.4 per cent said they considered Hamas as their

representative.

In a separate statement to the Jordan Times, Mr. Nazzari said that his organisation had met with Spanish and Chinese diplomats in Khartoum at the end of February. He did not say why this information was withheld from the media for over a week. He said his organisation wished to clarify that all diplomatic contacts being made by organisation was in order to secure the safe return of the expellees in South Lebanon.

Manir Said, a senior Hamas official in Khartoum, met with Augustus Cassinello, a political bureau official from the Spanish embassy in Cairo as well as with the Chinese ambassador to Khartoum. "It was a meeting upon their request," said Mr. Nazzari.

Hamas officials in Amman had meetings in February with the Jordan-based ambassadors of Britain, Germany and Italy as well as a senior U.S. diplomat.

Britain holds top-level PLO talk

(Continued from page 1)

He said the PLO did not get it wanted in talks in the United States.

"I believe that they now (think) they can raise some of them (their demands) with the Europeans, especially the British," said Mr. Beilin. "What I am afraid of is that as a result of it they will decide not to come to the negotiating table in April."

Mr. Hogg did not specify "concessions" sought from Israel. He said that in previous talks about expulsions "we have pushed the Israelis, sought to persuade them to build on that which they've already done."

Britain has condemned as a violation of international law the Israel expulsions.

Asked about the Israeli protest at resumed ministerial-level contacts with the PLO, the Foreign Office said the decision to hold the meeting was taken because the British government believed it would move forward the peace process.

"This meeting offered Mr. Hogg a chance to give Faisal Hussein and the PLO ... our views on why it is so important to get back to the negotiating table," a spokesman said. "The PLO will have an influence on this important decision."

The spokesman said the meeting came at a delicate stage in the peace process and Mr. H would make a similar point Israel when he met Mr. Beilin Thursday.

Mr. Arafat welcomed the British decision, saying it would strengthen Europe's role in the peace process.

"We express our considerable ... the British government resumption of contacts with organisation at ministerial level," Mr. Arafat said.

He also welcomed Belgium decision last week to upgrade PLO mission in Brussels from information and liaison office give it the title of General Palestinian Delegation.

The decision followed a meeting in Tunis last month between Mr. Arafat and Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes.

"These steps will certainly force the European role in the peace efforts in our area," Arafat said.

Mr. Arafat made his remarks in a message to Palestinians in occupied territories marking the 64th month of the intifada against Israeli rule. The message issued by the Palestinian national agency Wafa.

Mr. Arafat also talks with French Ambassador Jean-Bouillane de Lacoste in Tunis Monday.

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SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Warhurst saves Sheffield Wednesday

LONDON (R) — Reluctant striker Paul Warhurst kept Premier League Sheffield Wednesday's F.A. Cup hopes alive with a late goal to earn them a 3-3 draw in their quarter-final away to Derby Monday. It was the central defender's second goal of the tie and his 11th in the last 10 matches. First Division Derby ran Wednesday ragged in the second half and seemed to have sewn up a semifinal spot when they struck twice inside four minutes. But the remarkable Warhurst had the last word, sweeping in substitute Nigel Jenson's right wing cross with only five minutes left. The winner of the March 17 replay at Hillsborough will meet either Sheffield United or Blackburn, who play their quarter-final the previous day.

Blair wins top amateur athlete award

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Bonnie Blair, who captured two gold medals in speed skating at the Albertville Olympics, Monday night won the Sullivan Award as the nation's top amateur athlete of the year. The 28-year-old from Champaign, Illinois finally revealed in her fourth time as a finalist. Blair is only the third winter Olympic athlete to win in the award's 60 year history. The others were figure skater Dick Button (1949) and speedskater Eric Heiden (1980).

Bergkamp voted Dutch Footballer of the Year

AMSTERDAM (R) — Ajax Amsterdam's Italy-bound striker Dennis Bergkamp has been chosen Dutch 1992 Footballer of the Year. It is the second time Dutch league players have voted for the international marksman, who is to play for Internazionale Milan starting next season. Bergkamp also won the 1991 Dutch award. His Ajax team mate Wim Jonk, a defensive midfielder who is also moving to Internazionale next season, was runner up. 'SV Eindhoven's Brazilian striker Romario finished third.

Sonaly, Chen Lu head women's qualifications

PARIS (AP) — Three time European champion Surya Bonaly of France took advantage of another mediocre performance by American Nancy Kerrigan to lead the first group of women's qualifications Monday at the World Figure Skating Championships. In second group, China's Chen Lu won over Ukraine's Oksana Baiul with a sparkling programme that included six triple jumps. Bonaly also landed six triple jumps and had high technical scores to win the first group while Kerrigan again failed to impress.

Lawsuit filed on behalf of female boxer

SEATTLE (AP) — A 16-year-old girl who hopes to become an Olympic boxer is at the center of a sex discrimination lawsuit filed Monday by the American Civil Liberties Union. The lawsuit, filed in King County Superior Court on behalf of Jennifer McCleery, claims McCleery is being prevented from boxing in violation of state anti-discrimination laws. Kathleen Taylor, executive director of the ACLU of Washington, said the girl wasn't seeking the right to box against men, only other women.

Kasparov and Karpov take joint lead

BARCELONA, Spain (R) — World champion Garry Kasparov and his old rival Anatoly Karpov shared the lead at the Linares Grandmaster chess tournament after the ninth round Monday. Kasparov defeated Viswanathan Anand of India in 65 moves. Anand had been leading the tournament with six points from eight games. Kasparov, playing white, overtook Anand after winning two games with some clever tactical play. Karpov, playing black, outplayed Yugoslav Ljubomir Ljubojevic to win a smooth victory in 40 moves.

World Youth Soccer Championship

England beat U.S.; Saudis draw again

LEBOURNE (Agencies) — Ker Chris Bart-Williams hamed drew a 69th minute goal to give England a 1-0 win over the United States Tuesday and keep them on track for a place in the quarter-finals of the World Youth Soccer Championships. England, who drew their first up C match against South Korea, could have won by a goal but for some inept keeping by Jeff Cassar. However even Cassar, who made four spectacular saves, did not stop the young Sheffield Wednesday star who fired on a throw-in and struck ball into the top left-hand corner of the net. The American outsiders, who had European champions Turkey in an astonishing opening match, found the well-drilled English professionals a far tougher prospect.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
BY TANANIN HERSCH
© 1992 Tribune Media Services Inc.

WHERE'S THE ENTRY?

North-South vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 7 3
♥ K 8 5
♦ Void
♣ K 10 8 6 5 2

EAST
♠ Q 10 8 4 2
♥ A 9 6
♦ K J 10 9 8 3
♣ A 9

SOUTH
♠ K 9 5
♥ Q 7 4 3
♦ A Q 4 2
♣ J 3

he bidding:
ast South West
Pass Pass 1st
3 NT Pass Pass

Opening lead: Seven of ♠.

Here's a chance for you to test your analytical powers. Would you rather play or defend three no trump after a diamond lead?

South might have been wiser to pass North's double of three diamonds. However, the honors and not cards are particularly well suited for East-West, so it is unlikely that East will set more than one trick—a paltry penalty when there's a vulnerable game in the offing.

When this hand was played, East covered the opening lead with the eight and declarer ducked, winning a low diamond continuation with the queen. The jack of clubs was run to East's queen, and declarer's last diamond stopper was forced out. However, East had no entry to the good diamonds, so declarer came to nine tricks after forcing out the aces of clubs and hearts.

All seems pretty normal, but does the result answer our question? Although it might look reasonable on the surface, that's not really the case. West made a critical blunder that gave declarer the contract.

Suppose West were to shoot up with the ace of clubs on the first lead and return East to force out the ace of diamonds. Since declarer has no way to come to nine tricks without setting up clubs, and that suit cannot be established without allowing East to gain the lead with the queen, the contract goes the way of the dodo bird.

Declarer has no way to counter this defense. Move to the head of the class if you spotted it.

Formula One

Comings and goings mark season debut

PARIS (AP) — Nigel Mansell is gone. Michael Andretti has arrived.

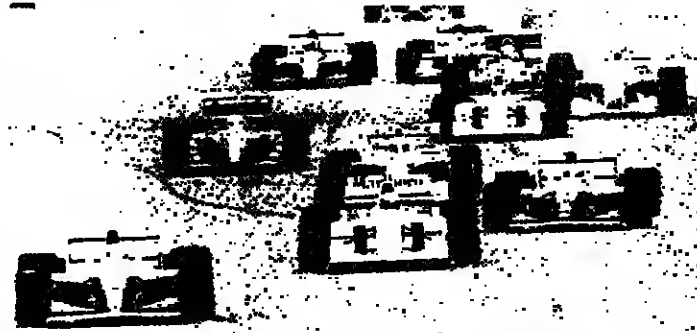
Ayrton Senna is back. And Alain Prost has returned, for the time being at least.

The Formula One racing season opens this week amid frantic comings and goings by the world's leading drivers. The maneuvering may not be over yet.

The opening race is the South African Grand Prix at Kyalami Sunday. It looked for a while as if the Williams team would be missing after dominating Formula One last year with Mansell at the helm.

Frank Williams sent his application for the 1993 season a day late to the International Auto Sports Federation, known as FISA. A few teams tried to block Williams' re-entry, but FISA held a special vote to admit the champions.

Another mainstay on the Formula One circuit — the French Grand Prix — also was in trouble. The race was first wiped off the calendar because of new French anti-smoking laws. The event was reinstated after various amendments were passed to protect competitors with tobacco advertising on their cars.



World champion Nigel Mansell (left, front) leads Brazil's Ayrton Senna (center) and Michael Andretti (right, front) at the Australian Grand Prix, Nov. 1992 (AP photo)

The biggest changes in Formula One this year involve the drivers.

Maansell, an Englishman who won the drivers' title last season with victories in eight races, left Williams in a dispute over money and joined the Indy Car Circuit in the United States.

Prost, a three-time champion who sat out last year's season after being fired by Ferrari, has returned to replace Mansell at Williams. However, the Frenchman faces a possible suspension on March 18 — just four days after the South African Grand Prix — for criticizing FISA.

Senna's situation was even more confused. The three-time champion, who has been with the McLaren team, expressed interest in joining Williams this season. But Prost, his bitter rival, effectively vetoed that move.

With no place to go, Senna has been negotiating with McLaren for a new contract. The Brazilian tested the new McLaren MP4 6 car at Silverstone last week, posting some of the fastest times of the winter at the British track.

The speculation ended Monday when McLaren announced that Senna would be driving for the team in South Africa.

Senna's teammate will be Andretti, a successful Indy Car driver who is the main new face on the Formula One circuit this year. He is following in the footsteps of his father, Mario, who won the Formula One title in 1978. Fittingly, Kyalami was the scene of Mario Andretti's first Grand Prix victory for Ferrari in 1971.

"It would mean everything to me, and I know it would mean everything to him, if we were the first father son combo to win the World Championship," Michael Andretti said.

A number of other driver shuffles occurred during the off-season.

Riccardo Patrese of Italy, Mansell's teammate at Williams last year, moved to Benetton to be alongside Michael Schumacher, the German star who rose to third in the standings in his first full year on the circuit. Damon Hill, son of the late Formula One champion Graham Hill, was hired as Prost's teammate at Williams.

Gerhard Berger, Senna's McLaren teammate, went over to Ferrari, although the Italian team is hesitating on a commitment to Formula One beyond the next few years.

Italian Cup

Milan, Juventus face Roma, Parma

MILAN (AP) — The last time AC Milan suffered a defeat, it was in an Italian Cup semifinal match against Juventus of Turin last April.

The 0-1 loss in a second leg game at Turin, following a goalless draw at home, eliminated Milan from the tournament.

Nearly one year later, and again in the Cup of Italy semifinals, AS Roma hopes for an upset victory to spoil Milan's hopes of a grand slam triumph.

The Milan powerhouse is shooting for its 13th league title and a fifth victory both in the European Champions Cup and in the Italian Cup this year.

Roma, unbeaten in the last seven league round, takes on Milan at Rome's Olympic Stadium Wednesday night.

Juventus, last year's losing finalist against Parma, plays cross-town rival Torino at Belle Alpi Arena in another first leg semifinal.

Cup matches grant Torino and Roma the opportunity to avenge losses in league games earlier this season. Juventus downed Torino 2-1 and Milan defeated Roma 1-0 on the road.

Juventus, which is looking for a record ninth victory in the Italian Cup, will be without injured striker Pierluigi Casiraghi but will still field an impressive offense including Roberto Baggio, Andreas Moeller and Gianluca Vialli.

Vialli was rested in Sunday's League game against Napoli, which Juventus won 4-3.

Its title hopes in the league



Juventus stars (from left to right) Thomas Hassler, Julio Cesar and Roberto Baggio

long faded, Juventus is concentrating on the Italian Cup, which awards a berth in next season's European Cupwinners Cup.

Torino will start a full strength team including Belgian midfielder Vincenzo Scotti and the Latin American duo of Walter Casagrande and Carlos Aguilera.

Big crowds are expected both in Turin and Rome.

AC Milan will miss several injured key players — Marco Van Basten, Frank Rijkaard, Roberto Donadoni and Mauro Tassotti — for Wednesday's match in Rome.

However Milan's roster of 25 players is rich with good substitutes such as Zvonimir Boban, Dejan Savicevic and Stefano Eranio.

French striker Jean Pierre

Papin, who scored nine goals in the last seven matches, will probably be rested Wednesday in view of Sunday's tough league match against Lazio and next week's champions Cup game with Porto.

Papin is expected to be replaced by young Italian forward Marco Simone who would team with Dutchman Rudi Gullik, Croatian Boban and Savicevic of Montenegro.

Flaky Argentine forward Claudio Caniggia, who's nursing a leg injury, is a questionable starter for Roma.

German midfielder Thomas Haessler, considered one of the best foreign players in the Italian league, will be the man to watch for Milan's defense, masterminded by veteran Franco Baresi.

Barcelona, Bremen in

"supercup" decider

BARCELONA (R) — Spanish champions Barcelona and Werder Bremen of Germany fight out the second, decisive leg of the European "supercup" at Camp Nou Stadium Wednesday with the score level and both sides in peak form.

Since last month's 1-1 first leg draw, Barcelona have gone top of the Spanish league with a run of impressive victories while Bremen underlined their well-being with a 3-0 win over Karlsruhe last week which put them second in the Bundesliga.

While both teams' minds are very much on the league prospects, they are also determined to take the trophy which pits the European Cup holders against the Cup Winners' Cup winners.

"The supercup brings prestige to a club and its players. We want to win it as this one is missing from our museum," said Barcelona striker Aitor Beguiristain, who has hit scoring form recently and netted both goals in Sunday's 2-0 win at Albacete.

Both sides have some injury worries.

Barcelona are sure to be without Dutch midfielder Richard Witschge, who had to quit the Albacete game with a recurring leg muscle injury.

Danish maestro Michael Laudrup is nursing a bruised left knee after Sunday's league match.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A rough morning was the Moon opposing Venus, squares Neptune and Uranus. The void of course starts at 11:29 a.m. Just as the Moon trines Saturn allowing for gain if all is kept practical and orderly.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Avoid going off on some tangent where an older person or condition is involved for otherwise you can have a good time and make headway toward secret desires.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Do get involved in any business matters today but be sure to see and be with good and understanding friends who will give you support you want.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) An older associate can attempt to arrange whatever you do in the world of outside activity but make sure you do what you yourself feel is best.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Timesome tasks should not be a part of today's activities but instead be out in the world of happiness and take your place to show your abilities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have a chance now to better understand your attachments views and be happy romantically if you avoid an outside companion who takes too much time.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September

22) You need to get away from your home for a day and get some inspiration from allies who are living and enjoying life as you would like to.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Making conditions about you more satisfactory require you do not go off to some temporary pleasures with one who holds you up in your duties.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You want to have a good time and it is available to you with very compatible comrades if you stick to those recreations which are not expensive.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Consider well the various things that your family expects of you and forget your own wishes in doing for those who dwell beneath your own roof.

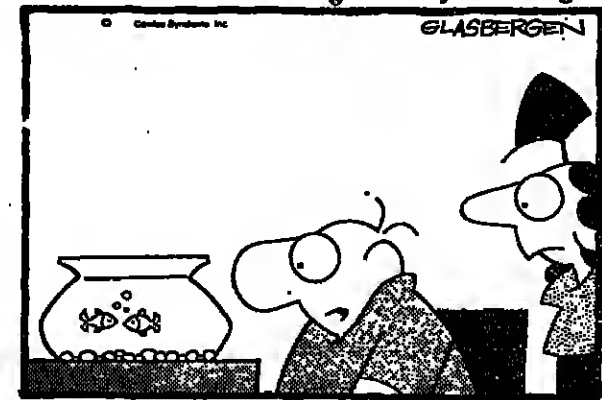
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) An unsolved problem of long standing that troubles you should be ignored today for your opportunities from getting out in the world and achieving.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You need to have a stronger and more definite realization of your abilities to bring to yourself an abundance; don't allow a depressive friend to steer you away.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have excellent ideas of your own for getting the things you most desire but a person who thinks he knows it all can take you off the track.

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



"I'm studying our goldfish. They're marriage is a better role model than my parents' marriage was."

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YORAF

LOVEH

BEWOLB

RUSTEY

Answer here: THE

Jumbles: GLORY TULLE NAUSEA HAMPER

Answer: What the back yard was to the laundress—A HANGOUT

(Answers tomorrow)

THE Daily Crossword by Joan O. Berbrich

ACROSS

1 Ruler

5 Repair

9 Which trial town

14 Ardently eager

15 "Take — leave it"

16 Stage comment

17 — Zapping

19 Where the Mats meet

20 Photo solution

21 Las Vegas

23 Founded: abbr.

24 Black gold

25 Mine matter

26 Giants' outfielder, once

27 Idi —

28 Eased

32 Demean

35 " — old cowhand —"

36 Sings

37 Atlantic City

40 Money in Milan

41 Outlying and spelling

42 Aquatic mammal

43 Airline abbr.

44 Pinocchio was one

45 Song syllable

46 June honoree

47 Deranged

48 Small child

51 Pl. Lauderdale

57 Expression of regret

58 1482 vessel

59 " — in Kalamazoo"

60 Struck hard, typically

61 Seal, for one

62 Dickens' heroine

63 Work by Elia

64 Raced

65 Salver

DOWN

1 Sign of merit

2 States firmly

3 Name in writing

39 Throng

44 Tossy

5 Square peg in a round hole

6 Lucy's sidekick

7 Coward

8 Mild cash

9 Pinet

10 In union

11 Ding-a

12 Biographer of Henry James

13 Pare's partner

21 Well-known

22 Knee or elbow

29 Gov. go.

27 Forest resin

28 Baseball's Willie

29 Famous Mae

30 Toward shelter

31 Penitence

32 " — was I ers —"

33 Fishing need

34 City in India

35 Conception

36 Kind of ray

38 Tolerate

39 Throng

44 Tossy

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

SOUL AGUE SUIDE

AMOS THEY WILDS

MOONSTORM FERRER

POSTCARD SPHERE

ARE BUNT

BRARY SAIR LARD

LOUS UDRE JORE

TURB CAT ABUT

WIST EVIS BUTES

SMER BAT

SHEDD POSTPAID

PLAID MOONSHINE

ALLIE ADIE LADOL

MAKES VIBR LAMB

51 Flower holder

52 "Desire Under the"

53 Shrine

54 Step —

55 Dog name

56 Carry on

China opens first oil exchange

NANJING (R) — China opened its first oil futures exchange Tuesday, a key part of government reforms to move to a market-oriented economy.

At the sound of a brass bell, yellow-vested traders rushed to the red-carpeted trading floor of the Nanjing Petroleum Exchange to shout out prices.

The first symbolic trade was pre-arranged: 1,818 yuan for one contract of April gasoil — a price that rhymes with the Chinese saying: "It's easy to get rich."

The trade was the first real futures contract traded in China for any commodity, as it was a standardised contract cleared through a central system.

Market rules on supply and demand quickly took over and by the end of the morning session the April contract had moved to 1,868 yuan with volume of 35 contracts.

May, June, July and August contracts also traded with total morning volume of 223.

To compare with overseas markets, the exchange used a swap market rate of 8.22 yuan to the U.S. dollar Tuesday. The official rate Monday was 5.72 yuan to the dollar.

"China needs an oil exchange because at present the circulation of goods is very poor," Joseph Yip, the exchange's general manager, said in an interview.

"As a real futures exchange we will use prices to allocate resources between those who have products and those who need them," he pointed out.

Such an exchange is possible because China, which used to keep tight control of its economy, has moved to free most prices.

The Nanjing market joins two stock exchanges and numerous other commodity markets at the

cutting edge of China's reforms.

"We are moving towards a free market in oil," Mr. Yip said.

"The government can control prices on only a very small amount."

The exchange's 49 members come from all over China, including oil specialists, enterprises and speculators.

The exchange, which has timed its twice-daily trading sessions to dovetail with Singapore and London trading, wants to have foreign members eventually.

China's freer atmosphere means that Nanjing is not the only place in China wanting to start an oil exchange.

Shanghai and Beijing are among several cities planning major oil markets cooperating with some of the same state-owned oil giants that started the Nanjing exchange.

International tourism picked up in 1992, OECD says

PARIS (R) — International tourism in developed countries recovered last year after a rather flat 1991, when the Gulf war put some people off travelling, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said Tuesday.

Tourism receipts in the OECD area, embracing 24 of the world's richest states, grew by 3.7 per cent in 1992 against 0.8 per cent in 1991 after adjusting for inflation and currency fluctuations.

The recovery took place "in spite of the continuing economic recession and the worsening of the conflict in what used to be Yugoslavia," it said.

An agreement giving Yugoslavia special associate status in the OECD ended last year.

The OECD said that Europe in particular gained tourists in 1992, recovering some of the visitors lost to North America and Asia in 1991 due to the Gulf crisis. Receipts in real terms — discounting the overall level of inflation — rose by one per cent after a one per cent drop in 1991.

In Britain revenues increased by 1.9 per cent after a 13.6 per cent drop in 1991.

"This is partly attributable to the fall in the value of its currency and to an increased number of North American tourists (arrivals up 20 per cent)," the Paris-based think-tank for rich nations said.

The United States remained popular, with receipts up 9.8 per cent. The dollar's weakness against most European currencies

and the yen was a big factor.

Canada saw three per cent fewer tourists arriving in 1992, with economic weakness in the United States, which provides 90 per cent of all visitors, the main reason.

"The six per cent rise in the value of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar was a critical factor," it said.

Among Pacific OECD countries, Australia's tourist revenues rose by 8.6 per cent as European visitors came in large numbers and growing Asian economies provided more tourists.

Expenditure on travel to OECD and non-OECD countries rose by 16 per cent in 1992 to \$223 billion. The deficit on tourism of the OECD states widened to \$14 billion from \$3 billion.

Philadelphia starts banking operations next Wednesday

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Another phase of restructuring Jordan's banking system will be completed when the new Philadelphia Investment Bank opens for business next Wednesday following the merger last week between Jordan Finance House for Development and Investment and Darco for Investment and Housing.

The new investment bank was formally announced by the Comptroller of Companies on March 2. The comptroller said that an extraordinary general assembly meeting of the two former financial companies was held on Feb. 16, 1993 and that the final approval of merger was then endorsed.

As such, the minister of industry and trade approved the registration of the new investment bank and the cancellation of both former institutions from the records.

Nasser Al Lozi, the general manager designated by the executive committee, or temporary board, to oversee the bank's affairs until a new board is elected, told the Jordan Times that Philadelphia Investment Bank has a JD 10 million capital at JD 1 par value per share.

The capital of the bank, which was registered at the Ministry of Industry and Trade as a public shareholding company under No. 224 on March 1, 1993, was allocated to be JD 7,119,861 or shares or (75 per cent) as being Jordan Finance House equity and JD 2,533,721 or shares as being the equity of Darco.

The remainder amount of JD 326,418 (shares) will most probably be put for private subscription to the shareholders of the new bank, because of the low volume, according to Mr. Lozi.

Mr. Lozi said that an ordinary general assembly meeting would take place Tuesday to elect nine board members and an auditor and hire a general manager. Next Wednesday would be the first business day under the new name, he added.

The Housing Bank had a large equity in Darco and will be an 18 per cent shareholder in the new bank. Other major shareholders would be Messers Isa Al Kazimi, Asad Al Asad and Mohammad Al Qirmani.

Mr. Lozi said the new bank would be able to open new branches noting that Jordan Finance House had a permission in the past to open two branches.

The general manager, who might only retain his board membership next week, said that Philadelphia Investment Bank would be hiring highly qualified personnel and focusing on computerising all its operations in the next few months.

The last and final financial company awaiting restructuring is the Real Estate Financing Corporation (REFCO).

REFCO is expected to become a JD 4 million investment bank carrying the name: The Middle East Investment Bank.

China ready to allow 100% foreign power plants

HONG KONG (R) — China is far they have always formed joint ventures with local partners to build and run plants.

Mr. Zhou, who is director of the ministry's department of major project equipment, said: "We welcome foreign businessmen to China to build wholly-owned power plants."

Speaking during a recent visit to Hong Kong, Mr. Zhou said power shortages were especially severe in major cities such as Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou. China's economy grew 12.8 per cent last year, more than twice the original target.

Zhou Heliang of the ministry of machinery and electronics industry told Reuters China would need at least 50 billion yuan (\$8.7 billion) at 1993 prices to invest in power plants up to the year 2000.

Hong Kong companies have led the drive to help China boost its electricity production but so far they have always formed joint ventures with local partners to build and run plants.

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Corruption crisis in Italy deepens

MILAN (R) — The Italian central bank was forced to intervene on the foreign exchanges to defend the lira Tuesday and share prices tumbled as markets feared the government could fall over a deepening corruption crisis.

The trigger for a fresh wave of selling of the Italian currency and stocks was news that the head of the giant state energy company ENI had been arrested on corruption charges.

State television said Gabriele Cagliari, one of the most senior business figures to be implicated so far in a nationwide kickback probe, was arrested for corrup-

tion and breaking the law on political party financing.

The lira slid to around 972 to the German mark, from 955 on Monday night, while the share price index on the Milan Bourse was showing a fall of 4.6 per cent at mid-morning.

"The market is afraid the government (of Prime Minister Giuliano Amato) may not survive," said Robert Meyer of Milan brokers Interim.

Financial markets had already opened in nervous mood after Mr. Amato said in a newspaper interview Tuesday that he had thought of resigning.

Clinton issues plea for economic plan

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton appealed to Americans Monday to help him get his economic plan approved by Congress without sacrificing his plans for a short-term fiscal stimulus and for long-term investment.

Addressing the legislative conference of the National League of Cities, Mr. Clinton said his economic package, which includes an immediate \$30 billion stimulus, is needed despite more and more indications of an economy recovering on its own.

"If anyone here... tells you that economy is fine in America, tell them that where you live there's still a little work that needs to be done," Mr. Clinton told his audience, an organisation of city and county government leaders.

He said this was the first economic recovery in his lifetime where the economic indicators are improving "but the jobs themselves are not yet being created."

Last week's improved unemployment report showing an unemployment rate of seven per cent, the lowest in a year, has led some on Capitol Hill to question the need for Mr. Clinton's stimulus, split between public jobs to repair roads and bridges and tax credits for companies that generate new jobs.

Mr. Clinton said that despite the encouraging economic news, "if you look behind those numbers, you see often those jobs are part-time."

Republicans have questioned the need for the tax increases in his package while some Democrats have wanted to change the nature of the spending cuts.

The investment portion of his package calls for \$153 billion in new education, transportation and other spending. Mr. Clinton's overall plan calls for \$325 billion in deficit reduction over four years, \$186 billion in new taxes and \$153 billion in new spending.

Mr. Clinton has been able to reuff complaints from the minority Republicans about his proposals. But opposition from members of his own Democratic Party could lead to some revision of his package.

Mr. Clinton, decrying the grid-

lock that gripped Washington when a Republican president and a Democratic-controlled Congress could not work together, said he was elected to bring change to Washington and would settle for nothing less.

"Let's do something," he shouted in his conclusion. "and let's do it now."

Opinion polls show Americans generally back Mr. Clinton's proposals and Mr. Clinton made a point of reminding Washington he has the people behind him, saying: "All across this country people have been taking off their special interest caps and putting on their thinking caps."

He rejected a position he attributed to Republicans that "all government spending is bad," insisting that there is a distinction to be made and that the "investments" he wants to make in job training and education are needed for the long-term health of the U.S. economy.

Democrats on the House of Representatives Budget Committee slashed \$63 billion from President Clinton's spending proposals Monday, although a few hours earlier he had agreed to a cut of only \$55 billion.

"The president's committed to making cuts and the first thing in the morning we'll take a look at the additional \$55 billion was not an inflexible number."

White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers had said earlier the cuts were necessary because revised figures by the Congressional Budget Office showed that under Mr. Clinton's proposals, his plan to reduce the deficit by \$140 billion would fall short of the goal.

In years past the House has refused to consider anything approaching such a gigantic step.

But Mr. Clinton changed the calculus this year by proposing hundreds of billions of dollars of cuts, combined with new taxes, in an effort to reduce the budget deficit.

House Democrats on the budget committee caught the fever and decided to cut even deeper than Mr. Clinton suggested.

The proposal must pass the full House and Senate before taking effect.

Financial Markets

in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 8/3/93	Tokyo Close Date 9/3/93
Sterling Pound	1.4423	1.4415
Deutsche Mark	1.6635	1.6630
Swiss Franc	1.5400	1.5385
French Franc	5.6405	5.6293 **
Japanese Yen	116.70	116.93
European Currency Unit	1.1690	1.1699 **

* USD Per STD
** London Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 9/3/1993

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.06	3.06	3.18	3.41
Sterling Pound	6.00	5.66	5.63	5.37
Deutsche Mark	8.25	7.81	7.37	6.76
Swiss Franc	5.25	5.12	4.75	4.37
French Franc	10.81	10.75	9.87	8.62
Japanese Yen	3.31	3.18	3.06	3.06
European Currency Unit	9.19	9.00	8.50	7.94

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Date: 9/3/1993

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	327.45	6.35	Silver	3.57	.080

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 9/3/1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6910	0.6930
Sterling Pound	0.9942	0.9992
Deutsche Mark	0.4151	0.4172
Swiss Franc	0.4489	0.4511
French Franc	0.1225	0.1231
Japanese Yen	0.5895	0.5924
Dutch Guilder	0.3694	0.3712
Swedish Krona	0.0907	0.0912
Italian Lira	0.0436	0.0438
Belgian Franc	0.02017	0.02027

* Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 9/3/1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8100	1.8240
Lebanese Lira	0.03839	0.04085
Saudi Riyal	0.1838	0.1853
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2200	2.2430
Qatari Riyal	0.1872	0.1885
Egyptian Pound	0.1940	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7620	1.7840
UAE Dirham	0.1872	0.1885
Greek Drachma	0.30575	0.31570
Cypriot Pound	1.3820	1.4050

* Per 100

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	7/3/1993	Close	8/3/1993	Close
All-Share	190.60		190.50	
Banking Sector	132.78		132.42	
Insurance Sector	213.22		213.02	
Industry Sector	270.67		271.02	
Services Sector	249.45		249.21	

December 31, 1992 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2434/39	Canadian dollar	1.6610/20
	1.8675/85	Deutschemarks	1.5370/80
	34.180/230	Dutch guilders	5.6380/70
	1600/1605	Swiss francs	7.6050/150
	116.90/117.00	Belgian francs	7.0500/600
	7.6050/150	French francs	6.3700/800
	7.0500/600	Italian lire	1.4415/25
	1.4415/25	Japanese yen	\$327.00/\$327.50
One sterling		Swedish crowns	
One ounce of gold		Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	

TODAY AT

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel.: 634144

ROADHOUSE

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30

Special show for children on Th. & Fri. at 11:00 a.m.

RETURN TO OZ

Cinema **CONCORD** Tel.: 677420

Kevin Costner
and Whitney Houston

BODYGUARD

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 8:15, 10:30 p.m.

Free Car Parking

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel.: 699238

THE PICK UP ARTIST

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 8:30, 10:30

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre Tel.: 675571

Presents as of March 17, 1993
the political comedy play

Definitely Democracy
(Demokratiyya Wa Nuss)
Zawwad Wild Awwad Party

Nabil & Hisham's
AHLAN THEATRE Tel.: 625155

New World Order

Plays continue daily at 9:00 p.m.
except Saturdays and Sundays

Happy Feast

CAR FOR SALE

Mercedes 230E, model 1992, black, automatic transmission, air conditioned, four electric windows, mileage: 14,000 km, with foreign plates, owned by a diplomat, like brand new. Price: JD 21,000.

Call tel. 687327

VILLA FOR RENT

Three bedroom completely independent villa in Shmeisani with telephone, central heating, car park and garden. Interested expatriates please call owner at Zarka 09-911211 ext. 2805

TWO LIVE BLUES

In late March, under the auspices of Royal Jordanian and the American Centre, rock and blues musicians Billy Stevens and Scott Ainslie will offer workshops in guitar and in the use of sound system. Interested musicians should contact the American Centre as soon as possible.

Tel. 820101 ext. 2579

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Abdoun, Opposite the New American Embassy 2nd floor, 123 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, an open area including living, sitting, dining, 2 bathrooms, 2 glassed-in balconies, separate central heating, water & electricity with an extra solar heating system and private garage.

For more details please call 824254 after 2:00 o'clock.

Note: The apartment can be rented with or without furniture.

ANNOUNCEMENT

A Jordanian industrial and trading company is in need of an efficient and experienced Executive Secretary with the following qualifications:

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- Minimum experience of five years in secretarial practice.
- Excellent fluency in writing, reading and speaking Arabic and English.
- Excellent typing in Arabic and English.
- Excellent knowledge in fundamental computer and telex applications.
- Good and impressive personality.

Suitable applicants should contact In Amman

Telephone no. 680048
between 9:30 a.m. till 2 p.m.

U.N. convoy stuck at Serbian border as Bosnia fighting continues

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — A U.N. relief convoy attempting to reach a trapped Muslim town in eastern Bosnia was stuck at the Serbian border Tuesday despite assurances from Bosnian Serb authorities that it would be allowed through.

Bosnia itself fighting was continuing in Sarajevo and in the north, but there were no reports of battles in the east, where the government side had threatened a counter-offensive to relieve blockaded Muslim settlements.

A spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Belgrade said the convoy of a dozen trucks carrying medical aid was stopped on the bridge at the Serbian border town of Mali Zvornik.

"We are seeking clarification — with those on the spot and at a higher level — of the agreement reached yesterday," spokeswoman Lyndall Sachs told Reuters.

The commander of U.N. troops in Bosnia, General Philippe Morillon, said Monday after talks with local Serb leaders that the authorities had agreed to let the convoy through to the Muslim settlement of Konjevic Polje, under Serb siege for 10 months, to evacuate the sick and wounded.

Later Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said his forces would allow all aid convoys through to eastern Bosnia.

Ms. Sachs said the convoy, driven by Swedish firemen

trained in first aid, had planned to evacuate 75 people from Konjevic Polje to the nearby Muslim stronghold of Tuzla.

Gen. Morillon said Monday that the same convoy had also been given permission to go to the town of Srebrenica, with 60,000 inhabitants including refugees from other fallen settlements, Thursday.

A UNHCR official and a World Health Organisation doctor who trekked to Srebrenica at the weekend said 2,000 people were sick and were dying at the rate of up to 30 each day. At least 9,000 were seeking evacuation, they said.

Gen. Morillon himself was in Sarajevo Tuesday trying to end the latest upsurge in fighting and get U.N. monitors stationed in eastern Bosnia.

At the same time U.N. officials Tony Land and Victor Andreyev were talking to Bosnian Serb leaders at their headquarters in Pale near Sarajevo to try to flesh out an agreement in principle struck by Gen. Morillon Monday to open humanitarian corridors to eastern Bosnia.

Fighting continued in Sarajevo, with activity concentrated on the western suburbs of Stup, Ilidza and Butmir and the road to the airport, which was closed three times Monday due to shelling.

Bosnian radio also reported shelling of Muslim positions in Brcko and Gradacac in the north of the country, while Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency re-



People carry away a man wounded by a shell which fell near the TV station in Sarajevo (AFP photo)

Yeltsin meets regional chiefs to marshal support for his plan

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin met powerful regional leaders Tuesday to marshal support for the eve of a battle with Russia's conservative supreme legislature.

Mr. Yeltsin badly needs the backing of the heads of Russia's semi-autonomous regional republics to press his plan for a power-sharing deal with the Congress of People's Deputies.

Regional leaders have told him they are opposed to a constitutional referendum planned for April. But most said at a meeting with parliamentary chairman Russian Khasbulatov Monday the Congress should bow to Mr. Yeltsin and allow it to go ahead.

If Congress, as seems likely, cancels the referendum and rejects the power-sharing deal, Mr. Yeltsin could find himself seriously hampered in his market reforms.

Mr. Khasbulatov insists the referendum, which Mr. Yeltsin says should let people choose whether they want a fully-fledged presidential republic, could tear the country apart.

Mr. Yeltsin, in what seemed like an oblique threat to suspend the constitution and impose presidential rule, said last week he could take a "final option" of measures to end the row if the two sides did not reach a compromise.

Congress dealt him a heavy blow in December, clipping his powers and forcing him to drop reformist acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar.

Some foreign observers say the situation in Russia is more unstable than at any time since a failed hardline coup in 1991, which triggered the collapse of the Soviet Union.

U.S. President Bill Clinton arranged to meet former President Richard Nixon Monday to

COLUMN

French film about AIDS wins Cesars

PARIS (R) — For once at a film awards ceremony, the tears were very real and the usual platitudes about art transcending life were all too apt. The French Cinema Academy hailed an off-beat story of a bisexual with AIDS, "Les Nuits Fauves" (Savage Nights), as the best film of the year at Monday night's Cesar ceremony, the French equivalent of the Hollywood Oscars. But Cyril Collard, the man who wrote, directed and starred in the film, was not there to bask in his glory. He died of AIDS last Friday at the age of 35. It was an emotional evening, as one by one Collard's collaborators on the film, dressed in mourning, walked up the podium and broke down in tears as they paid tribute to him. "I'll carry this film with me forever, Cyril, it's given me strength, it's given me life... I hope that up there you have already found some film stock and a camera," said his co-star Romane Bohringer, who was named most promising actress. "Les Nuits Fauves" picked up four awards, including Best Film and Best First Film. It tells the story of Jean, a fast-living, promiscuous bisexual Parisian who falls in love with a 17-year-old girl but only has the courage to tell her he has AIDS after he has slept with her.

Neighbours sue Travolta over size of his airplane

FORT ORANGE, Florida (R) — A state court has been asked to decide whether movie star John Travolta is keeping his large private jet, some residents at the exclusive Spruce Creek fly-in development have sued Travolta, an avid aviator who started in Urban Cowboy, Saturday Night Fever and Grease. Some Spruce Creek homeowners object to the noisy, 50,000-pound (22,700 kg) airplane he used to commute to his luxurious Florida home. "It's a big, big plane," said Stephen Ponder, a lawyer representing the Home Owners Association. "It looks like a commercial jet that seats 30 to 40 people." The upscale community near Orlando has its own private airstrip, and restricts airplanes to a 12,500-pound (5,700 kg) limit, a restriction enacted after Travolta bought his Gulfstream G-2 plane. The restriction was not meant specifically to target him, Mr. Ponder said. "This is a question of safety and welfare for the community," he said. A preliminary hearing is planned in staff court Wednesday.

Australian band burns Union Jack in call for republic

SYDNEY (AP) — One of Australia's most popular rock bands, Midnight Oil, burns Britain's Union Jack flag in a video for a new single that urges the declaration of a republic. The song, Truganini, is named after the last of thousands of indigenous aborigines of the Australian island of Tasmania who died out last century when white settlement brought disease and massacres. The Daily Telegraph Mirror reported Tuesday that the video shows a man draped in a burning flag as vocalist Peter Garrett sings: "I see the Union Jack in flames. Let it burn." Australia's flag includes the Union Jack. In recent years, there has been growing support for a new flag as well as the replacement of Queen Elizabeth II as head of state. Both causes have been backed by Prime Minister Paul Keating, whose Labour Party government, goes to the polls Saturday, two days after the video is to be released. Australia is a member of the British Commonwealth, an association of former British colonies that acknowledges Queen Elizabeth as symbolic head.

Only five months in jail — what a swindle

ULAN BATOR (R) — A 28-year-old Canadian who swindled his way to the top of Mongolia's society was pardoned by the president and released from jail. Timothy Flynn talked his way into the state guest house, flew for free on the national airline and even had an official Mercedes limousine at his beck and call. He passed himself off variously as the heir to Canada's largest family fortune, son of Newfoundland's provincial governor and distributor of Canadian aid, but landed in jail for five years last September for fraud and "bootlegging." The Mongolian president pardoned him after his family said he suffered from schizoid behaviour.

Angola oil industry threatened

LUANDA (R) — The Angolan government warned of a new long and bloody round of civil war and UNITA threatened Tuesday to "neutralise" vital oil installations in the north if government forces tried to recapture them.

"In the case of an attack, the (Soyo) oil sector will be neutralised and its regional infrastructure affected," the Voice of Resistance of the Black Cockerel Radio of the rebel UNITA movement announced.

The government army, chief warned Angolans earlier that

U.N. approves Cambodia elections

UNITED NATIONS (R) — China, an ally of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge, joined 14 other Security Council members Monday in endorsing the country's May elections without the participation of the radical guerrillas.

The Council's resolution, adopted unanimously, was the first time China had supported the U.N. peace process since it became clear that the Khmer Rouge would be excluded from the elections and a subsequent Cambodian government.

The resolution also expressed Council "readiness" to support the result of the elections for a constituent assembly which will lead to the formation of a new government "for all Cambodians" by September.

"In voting for the resolution, we have committed ourselves to supporting only the government which will emerge from the elections as the sole legitimate authority for all of Cambodia," said U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright.

The Khmer Rouge, which holds about a fourth of the country, has refused to join the May 23-27 election.

Meanwhile, five more Vietnamese soldiers have been found in Cambodia and should be deported immediately, the head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission told faction leaders Tuesday.

U.K. government talks down Maastricht defeat

LONDON (R) — The British government Tuesday tried to brush off its damaging defeat over closer ties with Europe and insisted the "minor setback" in parliament would not prevent Britain ratifying the Maastricht treaty.

But rebels from the ruling Conservative Party, emboldened by Prime Minister John Major's 22-vote defeat, increased calls for a referendum and threatened to inflict further humiliations over European monetary and political union.

"We reserve the right to oppose the Maastricht agreement tooth and nail. And that is what we are going to do," Conservative rebel James Cran said after the government's first defeat in the House of Commons (lower house) since 1986.

The rebels joined with Labour and Liberal Democrat opposition parties in the vote on a minor amendment concerning the make-up of a regional EC committee.

"Even the most pessimistic government supporters were dismayed by the size of the 314 to 292-vote defeat."

Outside the Chamber one Labour member slapped a Conservative rebel on the back. "Welcome comrade," he said with a grin.

Twenty-six Conservative rebels voted with the opposition and 19 abstained, wiping out the government's slender 20-seat majority in the 651-seat chamber.

The defeat would have been larger if the Conservatives had not won over the handful of Welsh and Scottish nationalists with promises about representation on the EC committee.

California nurse says officer taunted King in hospital

LOS ANGELES (R) — A nurse testifying in the Rodney King beating case said Monday that as the injured black motorist lay in a hospital emergency room, one of the accused white police officers taunted him, likening the beating to a baseball game.

Nurse Carol Edwards said officer Laurence Powell told Mr. King police had "played a little hard ball" with him, and had "bit a few home runs." A home run is the biggest hit possible in the U.S. national sport, which is played with a bat and ball.

She said Mr. King, who was expected to take the witness stand Tuesday, was not sweating and showed no signs of being under the influence of the drug PCP, as Officer Powell and his colleagues had testified in their California state trial last year.

Mr. King, who did not testify in the California trial of the officers, now accused in federal court of willfully violating his rights, will tell his story in open court for the first time since the March 3, 1991, videotaped beating.

He testified before a federal grand jury behind closed doors last year.

Prosecution lawyers had at first said they expected Mr. King to testify last Monday, but revised their estimates.

He is likely to remain on the stand for about two days. Prosecutors say they expect to question him for about 20 to 30 minutes, but defence lawyers say their cross-examination will last a day and a half.

Officer Powell, Officer Theodore Briseno and former Officer Timothy Wind are accused of violating Mr. King's civil rights by beating him with batons, kicking him and stomping on him.

Sergeant Stacey Koon, the senior officer during the beating, is charged with the same rights violation for allowing it to continue.

All four have pleaded not guilty. Each faces 10 years in jail and a fine of up to \$250,000 if convicted.

The officers testified in their California state trial that they thought Mr. King was under the influence of PCP when they tried to arrest him following a high-speed car chase.

Romanian opposition urges vote on reform strategy

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's opposition Tuesday challenged the minority left-wing government to put its tough economic reforms to a parliamentary vote.

Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu should assume responsibility for the government's proposed reforms," said Corneliu Coposu, head of the National Peasant Party (NPP), a mainstay of Romania's centrist opposition alliance.

Mr. Coposu made the remarks at the start of Tuesday's parliamentary debate on the four-year, austerity economic prog-

Massive U.S.-S. Korean military exercises start

SEOUL (Agencies) — U.S. and South Korean troops began 10 days of joint military exercises Tuesday with a large pre-dawn mock amphibious assault, as North Korea placed its entire army on full alert.

North Korean news reports, monitored in Tokyo Monday, said the hardline Communist state proclaimed a "semi war state" in response to the "Team Spirit" exercises, calling them a preparation for war.

Thousands of battle-ready U.S. and South Korean Marines came ashore at Pohang, 300 kilometres southeast of Seoul, in the first major field manoeuvre of the controversial exercises.

About 5,000 U.S. Marines from Okinawa landed in air cushioned landing craft deployed from American navy ships while thousands of South Korean Marines stormed ashore at nearby beaches.

The 10-day exercises, which end on March 18, are one of the largest joint war exercises in the world. More than 120,000 U.S. and South Korean troops are taking part.

North Korea, longtime rival of the pro-West South, has harshly criticised the exercises and called off talks on easing tensions with South Korea to protest.

The annual exercises, which began in 1976, were cancelled last year in a peace gesture to North Korea. They were reinstated this year after the North refused to agree to inter-Korean inspections of suspected nuclear weapons facilities.

Massive U.S.-S. Korean military exercises start

North Korea said its entire armed forces and citizens went into a "semi war state" to cope with what it called a military provocation from the South. The North's armed forces are estimated at 1.2 million.

The North ordered its 22 million people to "keenly watch every move of the enemy with high revolutionary vigilance and keep themselves in full combat readiness to destroy the enemy at one stroke," the North's official Korean Central News Agency reported.

North Korea took similar actions during the exercises in the past.

On Monday, 550 U.S. soldiers flew from McChord Air Force Base in Washington to Pohang nonstop for a parachute drop. Military officials said the planes refuelled twice in the air.

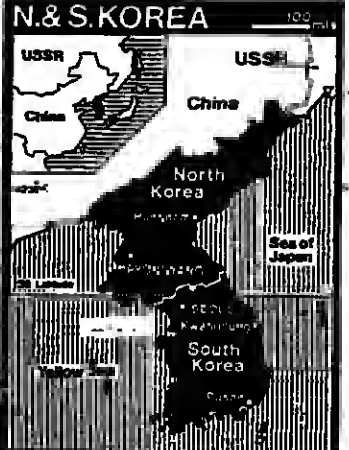
U.S. Air Force D-1B strategic bombers, Stealth bombers and F-15E fighters are to participate for the first time in the exercises.

In F117-A Stealth bomber and batteries of Patriot missiles, which also will be used in the exercises, were part of the U.S. arsenal during the 1991 Gulf war. The Patriots were shown in South Korea for the first time last year.

There are about 36,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in South Korea under a mutual defence pact. South Korea has about 650,000 troops.

North and South Korea fought a three-year war beginning in 1950.

North Korean radio broadcast live coverage of a mass rally in



the capital Pyongyang Tuesday as the country went on a "semi-war" footing in response to the start of the exercises in South Korea.

The report, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), said senior Workers' Party official Choe Tae-Pok addressed the rally, called in support of Monday's order by military chief Kim Jong-Il putting the Communist nation on heightened alert.

The North Korean newspaper Rodong Sinmun said Seoul and Washington intended to turn the military exercise into a "real war against the North."

Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa said Tuesday a nuclear-armed North Korea would threaten Japan and urged Pyongyang to let the United Nations nuclear watchdog inspect

two military sites.

"It is important for North Korea to allow nuclear inspections," Mr. Miyazawa told the Upper House Budget Committee.

He said Japan should regard the inspections as the highest issue in talks between Tokyo and Pyongyang on normalising relations.

On Feb. 25, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) gave North Korea one month to respond to the demand for access to the sites at Yongbyon, 100 kilometres northwest of Pyongyang.

North Korea rejected the IAEA demands, saying the move would be a serious violation of its sovereignty.

Pyongyang insists the installations at Yongbyon are conventional military sites and not subject IAEA inspection.

"North Korea under nuclear suspicion poses a threat not only to South Korea but also to Japan," Mr. Miyazawa said.

As long as Pyongyang refused to allow nuclear inspections, it would never clear doubts among the international community over its nuclear programme, he added.

Talks on normalisation of relations between Japan and North Korea broke up during the eighth round in Peking in November. New talks have not been scheduled.

North Korea has warned Japan that it would not resume normalisation talks if Tokyo continued to demand that Pyongyang comply with the IAEA demands.